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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-074 *16 April 1996*

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab Affairs: Arab League Head Consults FM's on Lebanon's Call For Meeting

NC1304200796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1825 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 13 Apr (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has stated that he is currently consulting with the Arab foreign ministers over Lebanon's request for an urgent meeting of the Arab League Council to discuss the Israeli military aggressions on Lebanon. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid strongly condemned these aggressions, which he said conflict with international laws and norms.

In a statement to MENA, 'Abd-al-Majid expressed the Arab League's full solidarity with the Lebanese people and their right to defend their land. He reiterated the League's backing for the Lebanese Government to adopt all the necessary measures to confront this outright aggression.

He stressed that Israel's bombardment of the Lebanese capital and nearby areas, endangering the lives of civilians, represents a flagrant violation of the Lebanese state's security, safety, and sovereignty.

Inter-Arab Affairs: Arab League Envoy—Israeli Bid To Start Civil War Will Fail

NC1204140996 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 5 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Salah Budaywi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Muhammad Subayh, Palestinian envoy to the Arab League, stressed that Israel's schemes to swallow up Palestinian and Arab territories and stir a civil war among the Palestinians will fail. In a statement to AL-SHA'B, he noted that the Palestinian people are well aware of these schemes and that Israel is mistaken if it believes it is capable of implementing them.

Subayh said that Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' statement on holding a referendum on the Palestinian and Syrian territories, before returning them, runs counter to a peaceful settlement. This position, he said, will motivate Palestinians to resort to violence to liberate their land by force. He warned the Zionist entity that its policy will rob it of the economic and political gains it made through its relations with certain Arab and Asian countries, because the peoples will not agree to the continued occupation of Palestinian territory.

Inter-Arab Affairs: Arab League Aide—Turkey-Israel Alliance 'Threat to Syria'

MM1604111796 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 Apr 96 p 4

[Report by Sawsan Abu-Husayn: "Muwaffaq al-'Allaf Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Turkish-Israeli Alliance Poses Direct Threat to Syria"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo — Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, Arab League assistant secretary general for political affairs [and former Syrian chief delegate to the talks with Israel], has described the Turkish-Israeli military alliance as strange at a time when Israel continues to claim to be working for a comprehensive peace.

Al-'Allaf said that the two sides could have established normal diplomatic relations at the political and economic levels. But for them to ally militarily at a time when the region's states are suffering from occupation and other dangers is a provocative action that conflicts with Israel's call for peace, Turkey's Arab relations, and good-neighborliness. Especially as this alliance is arousing fears, concerns, and dangers, because it could further worsen the explosive situation in the region and cause other complications for more than one Arab state. This matter requires a different Arab stand.

Al-'Allaf added that the Arab world should urge Turkey to annul whatever poses a threat to the Arab world and its interests. He pointed out that the first danger of this Turkish-Israeli alliance is the brutal aggression on Lebanon, the blockade imposed on the Palestinian people, and the suspension of the peace process. He stressed that Egypt and Syria are studying the matter very cautiously due to its seriousness.

On the possibility of Cairo's obtaining assurances that this alliance would not be used against the Arab states, al-'Allaf said that it would have been better if it had demanded that it be annulled, because assurances will not halt the dangers and threats. This alliance should have been aimed at developing the region, instead of intensifying their exercises in the Arab airspace.

Al-'Allaf said that this alliance poses a direct threat to Syria's security. It is, by any yardstick, aimed against Syria. It is also aimed against Iraq, Lebanon, and Iran, especially as Israeli missiles could reach these states under the agreement with Turkey. [passage omitted]

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Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: PLO Condemns 'Aggression' Against Lebanon

JN1304190696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The PLO Political Department condemned the recent Israeli aggressions against Lebanon and warned, in a statement issued this evening, of the dangers of the Israeli raids and aggressions on comprehensive peace in the region.

The statement said these operations fundamentally conflict with the bases of the peace process. The PLO Political Department urged the United Nations to move immediately to put an end to the military and security deterioration resulting from the Israeli aggression against the Lebanese territory.

Palestinian Affairs: PFLP-GC—Attacks Against Lebanon 'U.S. Aggression'

JN1504165696 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1330 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] issued the following statement:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O, sons of our people. Our Arab masses are following the criminal Zionist aggression against the sovereignty and national independence of Lebanon with concern. These masses view with regret and anger this studied Zionist crime, which was planned with the United States. The Zionist-U.S. warplanes mercilessly bombard Lebanese villages and cities, scores of innocent people are martyred, residential areas are shelled, roads are destroyed, and hundreds of thousands of people are displaced from their houses. The Zionist aggressors are practicing the ugliest Nazi and fascist methods to paralyze the living forces of our nation, confuse the resistance movement, and implement the conspiracy that was woven at the Sharm-al-Shaykh summit to impose the U.S.-Zionist solution that will serve as a bridge for the implementation and success of the Middle East plan in which sovereignty and domination will belong to the Zionist enemy.

The PFLP-GC added: The PFLP-GC finds that this sinful aggression has important and serious implications:

1. Zionist crimes are all the same. What Peres is doing against Lebanon and the Arab nation today is a continuation of what the Zionists have done since Ben-Gurion. Peres' crimes do not only equal the crimes of Begin, Shamir, Sharon, and Rabin, but also exceed them in size and style. The argument that Peres is different than past leaders and that he truly really seeks the alleged peace has proved false.

2. The current aggression is a U.S. aggression in the fullest sense of the word. First, it is the result of the Sharm al-Shaykh summit. Second, it is the result of an agreement between U.S. President Clinton and the Peres government reached when Clinton personally participated at the summit in the presence of his secretary of state, Warren Christopher.

3. The current aggression is part of the U.S.-Zionist conspiracy in the Middle East. The recent announcement of the Zionist-Turkish agreement completes the links of this conspiracy. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Daily Says Pro-Israel Bias Harms U.S. Role in Peace Process

TA1504175396 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 15 Apr 96 p 11

[Editorial: "The U.S. Double Standard's Ugly Face"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The flagrant U.S. backing for Israel in its continuing aggression against Lebanon, clearly stated yesterday by Secretary of State Warren Christopher amid widespread international condemnation and calls to stop this escalation, once again raises many questions not only about the biased U.S. role in the peace process but also about U.S. goals in this part of the world in view of this clear U.S. contempt for the international community, international legitimacy, and the Arab nation from the ocean to the gulf.

This is the same United States that mobilized all the world's leaders only a few weeks ago in the Sharm al-Shaykh summit under the slogan of "combating terrorism" — in the wake of the death of 62 Israelis in a series of suicide operations — which we see today clearly declaring its support for the killing of scores of Lebanese civilians; the wounding of hundreds of children, old people, and women; the displacement of hundreds of thousands of defenseless civilians from their villages and towns; and this immense devastation produced by its bombs and planes which it supplies to Israel.

This is a new confirmation of the flagrant U.S. bias against all Arabs, against their causes, and against international legitimacy if this legitimacy favors Arab causes. Moreover, this U.S. position has reaffirmed that the role of honest broker which America fulfills in the peace process is a mere illusion that has failed the real test, whereby the real pro-Israeli U.S. bias has been revealed in the clearest way and form.

Secretary Christopher said: "We respect the right of any country, like Israel, to retaliate when its population

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is exposed to rocket attacks." He, however, forgot or neglected to talk about the pictures broadcast by world television stations of women and children hit by American bombs dropped by American planes flown by Israeli pilots. He also ignored the pictures of the massive devastation and the collective displacement of Arab Lebanese civilians because of "this right" about which he was speaking.

More important, the U.S. secretary ignored the basis of the conflict relating to the Lebanese problem, which is the continuous Israeli occupation of large areas of Lebanese territory and the Israeli refusal to implement Security Council Resolution 425. Apparently, the right to security and sovereignty about which Christopher talks is confined to Israel only. The question we pose is: What about the right of the Lebanese people whose dignity, sovereignty, and security is being violated daily?

In the face of this U.S. contempt for the Arab nation, its leaders, the international community, and international legitimacy; and in the face of this new language which speaks of aggression, the shedding of blood, and the resort to force to solve disputes at a time when we believed that the peace process had transcended all that, the time has come for the Arab nation and leaders to carry out a serious assessment of the U.S. role and goals. In particular, as it has become clear that in the view of the U.S. Administration, which has always thrown dust in the eyes with glittering slogans about peace, combating terrorism, and human rights, the shedding of the blood of Arab children, women, and old people is now permissible. Those slogans have collapsed in the face of the continuing human tragedy in Lebanon, Palestine, and Iraq.

Palestinian Affairs: Raids, Joint Maneuvers Called Part of 'Plan' To Hit Iran, Iraq

MM1604081596 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 15 Apr 96 p 1

[Article by 'Abd-al-Bari 'Atwan: "Elimination of Hizballah"]

[FBIS Translated Text] While Israel continues to launch its bloody raids on Lebanon amid blessings and supportive Arab and international silence, joint Arab and U.S. maneuvers continue to be conducted in more than one Arab capital — indicating that secret agreements were reached at the Sharm al-Shaykh summit and that these agreements are now being translated on the ground according to the priorities of the stage.

The Kuwaiti Government, which is opposed to normalization with Israel publicly but is doing worse things secretly, yesterday announced maneuvers code-named "Ultimate Resolve" [al-hasm al-niha'i], in which U.S., French, and Italian forces are participating alongside its own forces. As for Jordan, which suddenly moved from the "against" [Kuwait] camp to the "with" camp, it too has announced air and land maneuvers with the United States, code-named "Eager Tiger" (note the name and its significance), in which the U.S. warplanes that arrived in Jordan last Friday [12 April] are participating with a view to flying sorties over southern Iraq.

This "eager" Jordanian-U.S. tiger — which emerged on the Jordanian scene after the defection of Major General Nizar al-Khazraji, former Iraqi chief of staff, who has been joined in the Jordanian capital by Lieutenant General Wafiq al-Samarra'i, former director of Iraqi intelligence — is not preparing to pounce upon Israel or Syria. It is waiting for the go-ahead to join the Kuwaiti "Ultimate Resolve" maneuvers to form a pincer around Iraq in order to attack Baghdad and topple the regime, which still has not collapsed, and to achieve what operation Desert Storm failed to achieve.

Having destroyed Iraq and neutralized Egypt, Syria, and the Gulf states, the United States is now seeking to pounce on Iran to destroy its growing military and nuclear capabilities, which are worrying the Hebrew state, posing a threat to its strategic military superiority, and preventing it from reaching the warm waters of the Gulf as the region's policeman and the accredited U.S. security agent. It will only be able to achieve that after bringing about change in Baghdad and opening Baghdad to U.S.-Israeli bases.

We are not proceeding here from the "conspiracy theory," but, rather, from incidents and realities on the ground, first and foremost the recent Turkish-Israeli strategic agreement, under which the Hebrew state is entitled to use Turkish bases in north Syria, Iraq, and Iran. It is no coincidence that the new Israeli invasion of Lebanon coincides with the Jordanian "Eager Tiger" maneuvers, the Kuwaiti "Ultimate Resolve" maneuvers, [UN] Security Council deliberations to impose sanctions on Sudan, and U.S. threats to bomb Libya on the pretext that it has a chemical weapons factory.

The plan is clear. It is based on eliminating all Arab and Islamic resistance pockets, in collaboration and collusion with the regimes that participated in the Sharm al-Shaykh summit and the Hafr al-Batin alliance. Israel has been assigned to take care of Hizballah, the only body threatening the completion of the peace process and raising the resistance banner in defense of Arab and Islamic dignity. What other explanation can there be for the absolute freedom given to Israeli aircraft to raid Lebanon over the past five days, without any of

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them being shot down or a single Israeli soldier being killed or wounded?!

Just as the Arab-Israeli-U.S. "understanding" led to the PLO and its forces being moved from Lebanon in the wake of the invasion in the summer of 1982, the same understanding is being forged to destroy Hizballah, now in the spring of 1996, so that Peres can prove his masculinity and win the elections and hence resume the peace process on the basis of the agreements resulting from the negotiations, without the trouble of the Katyushas, which are embarrassing the new capitulationists.

It is a big conspiracy which began in the Gulf war to destroy Iraq's capabilities and then moved on to eliminating all pockets of Arab resistance against the new Israeli-U.S. scheme; next it is Iran's turn, which is why we may soon hear some people in Tehran, Damascus, and Cairo saying: "We were eaten the day the black Iraqi bull was eaten."

Palestinian Affairs: Ministry Denounces Israeli Action Against Megiddo Prison

JN1304143996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a press statement today, the Information Ministry denounced the occupation forces' storming of the Megiddo Prison and the firing of bullets, rubber bullets, and gas canisters at detainees. Some 40 detainees were wounded or asphyxiated.

The ministry said this crime is an escalation of the Israeli violation of human rights and the peace agreements, particularly regarding the detainees.

The ministry called on the human rights institutions to investigate the criminal act against detainees at the Junayd Prison on which the Israeli Government imposed a complete news blackout.

Palestinian Affairs: Minister Confirms Identity of Person Wounded in Jerusalem

JN1404093096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tourism and Antiquities Minister Ilyas Frayj said the explosion that occurred on 12 April at the Lawrence Hotel in occupied Jerusalem was a criminal act aimed at tarnishing Palestinian reputation and damaging tourism in Jerusalem.

Frayj said the truth was discovered, and the criminal who was making the explosive device was a Jew carrying a British passport.

The tourism minister was reacting to statements by the occupation police which alleged that the explosion occurred as a Palestinian was making an explosive device.

Palestinian Affairs: Fatah's Jihad Condemns PA's Actions Against Hamas

MM1504151896 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Apr 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Fatah Central Committee Member Condemns Palestinian Authority Measures Against Hamas"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tunis, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Fatah Central Committee member Muhammad Jihad has stressed that peace will not be achieved in the Middle East, and that the Palestinian people's issue is much bigger than the return of 7,000 Palestinian policemen to the occupied Palestinian territories. The Fatah military official condemned the measures taken by Palestinian security services against Hamas in the self-rule areas.

Muhammad Jihad, who boycotts the Palestinian leadership meetings because of his strong opposition to the Oslo agreement, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the region is approaching a new stage of escalation and explosion and that recent events have resulted in a strong comeback for the Palestinian intifadah.

Jihad pointed out that there has as yet been no real achievement on the ground on the Palestinian track as a result of Israel's procrastination over the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy and also because of the U.S. Administration's complete bias against the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

Muhammad Jihad pointed out that Israel's repressive measures against the Palestinian people and its air, land, and sea bombardment of the Lebanese people, in addition to its procrastination over the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy on the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks, are clear evidence that it does not want peace in the Middle East and that all it wants is to achieve security for Israeli citizens and to invade the Arab world economically. Muhammad Jihad stressed that the United States is responsible for the faltering of the peace process because of its complete bias toward Israel. He said that the Oslo process has not achieved any of the Palestinian people's rights or aspirations.

In this context Muhammad Jihad, a prominent military commander in Fatah, said that the most important thing with regard to the Palestinian issue is the right of existence and the right to self-determination and

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to establish a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. He stressed that none of that has been achieved so far, because the Israeli occupation is still in the Palestinian territories, Palestinian prisoners are still in Israeli jails, and Israel continues to build settlements and bypasses. Muhammad Jihad stressed that the Islamic movement Hamas is an integral part of the Palestinian national movement and thus the Palestinian Authority [PA] should not take repressive measures against it.

Muhammad Jihad condemned the measures taken against Hamas by some Palestinian security services, describing them as "repressive and unjustifiable." [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: PLO's Qaddumi on Charter Amendment, Violence

NC1404095396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Apr (MENA) — Faruq Qaddumi, alias Abu-al-Lutf, head of the PLO's political department, stressed that the next Palestinian government will not have a foreign minister since he will continue to carry this portfolio despite his non-participation in the elections and his refusal to return to the self-rule areas.

In an interview with AL-AHRAM published today, Qaddumi said that the PLO is the central government, that the Palestine National Council [PNC] and the PLO represent the Palestinian people, and therefore the Palestinian Authority's [PA] term of reference are the PLO and the PNC while the current Palestinian Council is just a local authority.

He added: The agreements signed with Israel note that foreign relations remain outside of the realm of the PA and that the latter has no right to send missions abroad or open embassies. The PLO can undertake the foreign tasks, noting in this regard that at its ninth session, the PNC proclaimed the document of independence and the establishment of the Palestinian state, a number of Arab and friendly states recognized it, a number of Palestinian embassies were opened, and Palestine is represented in the United Nations.

On the Israeli demand for amending the Palestinian charter, Qaddumi declared his total refusal to meet the Israeli demand. He said: We have recognized two states in Palestine, one Arab and one Jewish. Why should we amend the charter. At the same time, we have recognized Resolution 242 as the basis for the just political settlement of land in return for peace. He stressed that the charter's amendment is the responsibility of the PNC and not of the PA or the Legislative Council.

He said: We are doing all we can to prevent a Palestinian conflict inside [the territories] and are tolerating some of the wrong measures taken by the PA as a result of the heavy pressures on it. He added: What Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and al-Jihad are doing is part of the national movement of resistance to the Israeli occupier. This is a legitimate resistance despite our declaration of supporting peace after accepting the Bush initiative and the Oslo agreement. After stressing that Israeli violence must be countered by Palestinian and Arab violence, he said: I tell the United States and the world that we are looking for justice and privilege and an end to the occupation. Then we will protect the security of Israel and of every Israeli who comes to our country. The occupation is terrorism and not the other way. We do not want to appease the international situation at the expense of just and lasting peace.

Palestinian Affairs: PLO's Hurani, PNC's al-Za'nun Interviewed

JN1504095896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0430 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Telephone interview with 'Abdallah Hurani, PLO Executive Committee member, and Salim al-Za'nun, Acting Palestine National Council Speaker, by radio correspondent Fathi al-Barqawi in the studio; place not given; from the "A New Day" feature — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Al-Barqawi] Brother Abu-Munif ['Abdallah Hurani] good morning. First, let us discuss national dialogue. How do you envisage it?

[Hurani] Brother Fathi, every time the Palestine National Council [PNC] convenes, it is preceded by a comprehensive dialogue among all the PLO factions, forces, and figures to develop joint or uniform stands. This was always the practice, and it was a good one as it facilitates discussions within the PNC. If the PLO resorted to such a good practice on previous occasions which were less dangerous and less sensitive, then it would be more useful for the PLO to resort to such a dialogue under the current circumstances which, most probably, are the most difficult and serious in our history, particularly that the PLO witnessed upheavals and differences of opinion which resulted in very divergent positions. For the PLO to once again resort to this dialogue, to me, is a positive and good step that prepares for the PNC meeting. [passage omitted]

[Al-Barqawi] There is another question, dealing with the convocation of the PNC. Can the PNC meet under the current circumstances, particularly that Israel bans some PNC members from entering, as was the case on 13 April with Rashad Abu-Shawar from the Palestinian Liberation Front, and Layla Khalid yesterday...

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[Hurani, interrupting] Rashad is one of our well-known writers and belongs to the entire people more than he belongs to a specific faction.

[Al-Barqawi] Brother Abu-Munif, we have on the line brother Salim al-Za'nun, Abu-al-Adib, speaker of the PNC. Brother Abu-al-Adib, what do you have to say to Israel's banning PNC members from entering?

[Al-Za'nun] If this problem having to do with Layla Khalid and Rashad Abu-Shawar is not settled, and if the remaining 82 PNC members do not return before 18 April, then Gaza will not be a suitable venue for the PNC session. This is because the Palestinian command has a duty to provide a venue that will be accessible to all the PNC members. We cannot meet on land that we do not control and where we do not have the right to protect the members.

[Al-Barqawi] Then the only obstructions are Israeli ones?

[Al-Za'nun] There is no doubt about this. We were promised that all this will be settled before 18 April. I say before 18 April because after this any member, if allowed to come, will not be able to do so. We have members who are in America, and in various parts of the world. We cannot accept that the PNC meets while 20 or 30 of its members have been banned from entering or were not given sufficient time to come. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: DFLP Member Denies Contacts Between Authority, Opposition

JN1604115596 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 16 Apr 96 p 13

[Report by Kamal Zakarinah in Amman]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Taysir Khalid, member of the Political Bureau of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], denied that there is currently any dialogue or contacts between the Palestinian Authority and opposition factions.

In a statement to AL-DUSTUR, he said that there are factors and requirements needed for national dialogue to begin successfully and achieve its goals. The most important of these requirements are that the authority should halt its practices and pressure against public liberties and citizen's rights, stop its arrests, release political prisoners, as well as clearly and frankly define the topics and objective of the dialogue, for which the authority is calling, and answer a set of national issues such as the document of understanding between Mahmud Abbas and Yosi Beilin and the truth behind negotiations with the settlers.

Khalid added that the Palestinian opposition cannot accept dialogue in light of secret negotiations with Israel. He noted that the DFLP is coordinating its positions on the authority's statements and stands with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, in particular, and with Palestinian national forces, organizations, and figures, in general. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Hawatimah—DFLP Not To Participate in New PA Government

TA1504181896 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 15 Apr 96 p 13

["Exclusive" AL-QUDS report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, INTERMEDIA — Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], has affirmed that his left-wing opposition faction will not participate in the Palestinian government expected to be formed within the next few days by Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat.

Hawatimah, who arrived two days ago in Amman on a private visit that will last several days, said: "We are among those who oppose Oslo and who support 242 and 338."

It is worth noting that the DFLP has decided to allow its cadres and leaders to return to the Palestinian Authority [PA] areas and that some members of its political bureau, including Dawud Talhami, Salih Zaydan, Muhammad Abu-Ghawsh, and Rima Nazzal have actually returned.

Hawatimah said that he intends to return to the homeland but that his return will not be with conditions.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Confirms DFLP's Hawatimah To Return 'Soon'

JN1504192496 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] President Yasir 'Arafat today confirmed that Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], will arrive in Palestine soon. After a meeting with Faruq Qaddumi, chief of the PLO Political Department, 'Arafat said Hawatimah will return to Palestine and that his return will constitute a positive development in the peace process.

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Palestinian Affairs: 'National Dialogue' Meeting 16 Apr To Prepare for PNC

JN1304063496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, President Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, told the Voice of Palestine a short while ago that a national dialogue will be held on 16 April to prepare for the ordinary session of the Palestine National Council [PNC] on 22 April. Abu-Rudaynah said that President 'Arafat called for this national dialogue among the various PLO groups in addition to some independent national figures out of his eagerness to maintain national unity among all Palestinian factions.

Abu-Rudaynah said that a committee led by al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, the presidential secretary, and including Sulayman al-Shurafa' and Nabil 'Amr as members, will issue invitations to the PLO factions and some independent figures to come to the homeland to begin this dialogue.

Palestinian Affairs: 55 NC Members Demand Postponement of PNC Session

JN1204193396 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 12 Apr 96 pp 1, 20

[Report by Kamal Zakarinah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — Fifty-five members of the Palestine National Council [PNC] living in Jordan asked that the PNC 21st session be postponed. Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian National Authority, had called for a PNC session on 22 April in Gaza.

In a meeting they had at the PNC building in Amman, the members discussed the latest developments related to the Palestinian situation. They condemned Israeli violations, the blockade imposed on the Palestinian cities, and Israel's failure to implement the agreements it signs.

The conferees stressed the need for initiating a national dialogue and contacts among the Palestinian factions, PNC members, and within the factions themselves on national unity before the PNC is convened.

They demanded that the meeting be postponed so that a comprehensive national dialogue could be held. They stressed that the PNC must not be subject to the Israeli elections and that the National Charter must not be presented as a gift to it.

They demanded that Israel rescind the Jerusalem annexation decision, change its national anthem and charter, and be committed to the agreements it signs before asking the Palestinian side to discuss the Palestinian National Charter.

A committee representing all PNC political trends was fomed. The committee is comprised of Salih al-Barguthi, Ibrahim Abu-'Ayyash, Hamadahra'inah, 'Awni Battash, Ishaq al-Khatib, Lyala Khalid, 'Ablah Abu-'Ulbah, and Hind al-Husayni. The committee will draft all the ideas that were discussed at the meeting to be sent to President 'Arafat and the PLO Executive Committee. The committee began its meeting last night.

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Algeria

Algeria: Foreign Ministry Issues Statement on Israeli 'Aggressions'

LD1304214696 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The official spokesman for the Algerian Foreign Ministry said the Algerian government is following with great concern the dangerous developments of the situation in Lebanon because of the Israeli air shelling of Beirut's southern suburb and other areas of Lebanese territory.

The Algerian government strongly condemns these new Israeli aggressions which are in breach of the essential rules of international law and infringes upon Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Algerian government observes that by resorting to force, Israel fails to observe the necessary conditions to establish a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East which is the legitimate aspiration of all peoples in the region.

In this context, the international community, particularly members of the UN Security Council, should put the necessary pressure on the Israeli government to make it respect Resolution 425 of the UN Security Council which calls particularly for the unconditional withdrawal of Israel from the border strip it continues to occupy in Southern Lebanon.

Algeria: Party Leaders Comment on Meetings With President Zeroual

LD1504220196 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] President Liamine Zeroual this evening received the leaders of two political parties.

Boualem Benhamouda made a statement following his meeting today with the president:

[Begin Benhamouda recording] I was received by the president in my capacity as the secretary general of the National Liberation Front's Central Committee within the framework of the national dialogue, which the president called for and confirmed verbally and in a memorandum, in order to get Algeria out of the crisis.

The president presented to us the plan that he intends to follow during the coming phases of the national dialogue. These phases will end, as he believes, with a national conference. The aim of the national conference is to endorse the principles ruling political relations and the rules of political activities, whose main objective is to refer or go back to the people to choose their representatives freely and democratically. [end recording]

[Announcer] The president this evening also received Noureddine Boukrouh [leader of Party of Algerian Renewal], who made the following statement:

[Begin Boukrouh recording] Previous rounds were always linked with special circumstances. The national dialogue of September 1994 took place under special conditions. This coming dialogue will be on a wider bases. All political partners in Algeria are invited to think of defining new rules for the political bases, as I said at the beginning. Therefore, this time the national dialogue is not about definite issues or about holding elections. It surpasses the holding of elections. Today, we are invited to think beyond the issue of elections or changing a certain law. The issue here is greater and more comprehensive than that. We hope that what is coming will bring good. There will probably be a way to get out of the crisis permanently and achieve permanent stability in Algeria. Thank you to all. [end recording]

Algeria: Ennahda Movement Agrees To Participate in Dialogue

LD1304131196 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ennahda movement announced yesterday through a statement by its leader Abdallah Djaballah its acceptance of the invitation of President Liamine Zeroual to take part in the current new phase of the dialogue. The statement was made during a news conference held by Abdallah Djaballah in Batna yesterday. He stressed that his movement intends to take part in the dialogue with a suggestion that a set of principles be agreed upon:

[Begin Djaballah recording] We think the dialogue must include at least three main topics. The first is an agreement on principles, which means an agreement on a set of principles and rules on the basis of which the state must be built and respected. The second is to stop the shedding of blood. How long will the blood of the Algerians be spilled? The third is that legal guarantees must be given concerning free and fair elections. [end recording]

Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak, 'Arafat, Aides Hold Round of Talks

NC1604103196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0935 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 16 Apr (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak held a round of talks at

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the Presidential Office with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat immediately upon the latter's arrival in Cairo today.

The meeting was then joined by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa; Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs; PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas; PLO official spokesman Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman; Palestinian Ambassador to Egypt Zuhdi al-Qidrah; and Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, 'Arafat's media adviser.

Egypt: Musa Supports Lebanese Premier's Request for Cease-Fire

NC1504150496 Cairo MENA in English
1402 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, 15 Apr (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today said he supports the request made by Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri for an immediate cease fire in Lebanon in order to give a chance for peaceful efforts to secure implementing the cease fire agreement concluded by Israel and Hizballah in July 1993.

Civilians from both sides should be protected from shelling, Musa added. Israeli forces should withdraw from Lebanon in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 425, Musa said.

Egypt: Musa Telephones Israeli Counterpart on Lebanon

NC1304164896 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1635 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 13 Apr (MENA)— Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has telephoned Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq as part of Egypt's diplomatic moves to contain the tense situation in Lebanon.

Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri is expected to hold further consultations in Cairo tomorrow, Sunday, with Egyptian officials to discuss ways of emerging from the current crisis.

Egypt: Al-Baz Criticizes Israeli Raids Against South Lebanon

NC1304185096 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1820 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Zaqaziq, 13 Apr (MENA)— Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the president's office for political affairs, has criticized the raids Israel is conducting against south Lebanon.

In a speech he made about contemporary political changes at al-Zaqaziq University today, Dr. al-Baz said that the road to the peace process is paved with thorns and that it is not easy to complete. He underlined the need for all of the region's states to free the region of the nuclear weapons that are bound to shake stability and safety.

Dr. al-Baz stressed that Egypt is against any plot to partition Iraq or harm the interests of its people.

Asked about Egypt's efforts to learn of the actual dimensions of the military agreement between Turkey and Israel, al-Baz said that Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa will head for Turkey in a few days to find out the truth of the matter.

Al-Baz believes that Israel does not have what it takes to invade the region culturally, pointing out that Egypt is capable of protecting the entire region against any cultural invasion.

Egypt: Cairo Dailies—Israeli Attacks Destroying Peace Process

NC1404082896 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0610 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Apr (MENA) — The Cairene papers published today voiced their deep dismay with Israel's continued blatant aggression against Lebanon and say that this new aggression is an aggression against peace itself. They call on the Arab countries to show quickly and positively their solidarity with the Lebanese government and people.

AL-AHRAM writes that the new Israeli aggression against Lebanon contradicts the UN Security Council resolutions and the peace process arrangements in the region, returns the whole region to the state of tension it was in before the Sharm al-Shaykh summit, and recalls the repeated Israeli aggressions of the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon in 1982. It warns that Israel will lose too much if it persists with its aggressive policy and its intransigence over the other negotiations' tracks. It says that the Israeli government must understand that aggression will not benefit it in its elections battle.

AL-AKHBAR says that the Israeli aggression against Lebanon will destroy the peace process in the region, and the Israelis must realize that withdrawal from south Lebanon is the only guarantee for the security of northern Israel because there will be no reason for the presence of Hizballah or any other organization when Israeli forces withdraw.

In its editorial, it says that no one can ignore the legality and legitimacy of resisting the occupation with

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all its resources and that Israel's call to the Lebanese government to silence the resistance is an unacceptable call unless Israel proves its seriousness and good intentions to reach a comprehensive and just peace based on the principle of land in return for peace.

The paper stresses that the barbaric Israeli actions against Lebanon that lack the defensive capabilities will only double the number of desperate and disappointed whose reactions cannot not be foretold.

AL-JUMHURIYAH says that the Israeli actions conflict with the Sharm al-Shaykh summit resolutions and with all the peace calls and force us to reassess our stands. It stresses that there cannot be peace negotiations at a time when Israel is giving its forces a free hand to do what they want in all of the occupied Arab territories. It points out that Israel needs to understand that it cannot force the Arabs to surrender through the use of force.

The paper adds that Israel will be the major loser in this adventure that it has badly miscalculated. It stresses that the Israeli actions have revealed the type of peace it wants with the Arabs. Israel today, it says, is the same Israel that committed the Dayr Yasin massacres and the same Israel that attacked the civilian Abu Za'bal factory, destroyed the Bahr al-Baqr school with children inside it, and killed Egyptian prisoners in Sinai.

Egypt: Cairo Dailies Condemn Israeli 'Aggression' in Lebanon

NC1504104296 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 15 Apr (MENA)—Cairo papers today have once again condemned the continued bestial Israeli aggression against Lebanese territories, confirming that this could delay the achievement of peace in the Middle East—a peace that could realize progress and stability for all people in the region.

In their comments, the Cairo papers criticize the silent U.S. stance on this aggression which, if continued, could destroy the peace process or put it in reverse gear.

Under the headline "Israel and its Mistaken Concepts", AL-AHRAM says that events have once again proven that Egypt is the sponsor of peace in the Middle East and the one calling for it. The evidence for this is that Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri came to Cairo in an attempt to invest the Egyptian role in stopping this bestial Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

The newspaper notes, in this regard, that Cairo opened its lines of contact with all concerned parties to stop the deterioration of this dangerous situation and to intervene in the crimes Israel is committing on Lebanese territories, such as shelling civilians, villages, and installations.

The newspaper reaffirms that Israel's crisis lies in the fact that security is more important than peace, and this is the biggest mistake Israel is making. The evidence for this is that Israeli security has never seen the light, because of its occupation of southern Lebanon since 1982.

For its part, AL-JUMHURIYAH newspaper describes the Israeli aggression on Lebanon as state terrorism that shields itself behind the U.S. veto in the Security Council in reaction to the international attempt on moral condemnation of the Zionist policy.

The paper says that no one can repeat the saying "patience is worthwhile." The Israeli scheme, which becomes clear day by day, is to establish peace under the threat of weapons and by force. Such a peace is rejected.

The paper points out that while Israel stands armed with hundreds of atomic weapons and talks in the voice of a dove about peace with those Arabs who reject armed means, the United States stands calling on all Arabs to establish peace with the Zionist state.

The paper adds that the United States sets one condition for the possibility of establishing this promised peace. This condition is qualitative and quantitative military superiority over all Arab countries, in addition to the agreement between the United States and Israel to realize peace with countries outside the region, particularly with Iran and Pakistan, since they are two Islamic countries that theoretically have the possibility of developing nuclear forces in ten years or more.

Under the headline "The Logic of Force and U.S. Sympathy With Israel", the newspaper AL-AKHBAR wonders in its editorial: Has the logic of force become the logic of justice and truth? The paper says that this question has become the most repeated question these days in light of Israeli aggression, which has extended throughout Lebanon.

In this regard, the newspaper strongly criticizes the U.S. stance, which sympathizes with these Israeli attacks against Lebanon, confirming that this indiscriminate violence cannot serve the peace process.

The newspaper demands that Israel must respond to the voice of reason and logic and understand that force will never enable it to realize security.

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Egypt: Cairo Dailies Criticize U.S. Support for Israeli 'Aggression'

NC1604073396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 16 Apr (MENA)—Cairo newspapers today continue their denunciation and condemnation of the Israeli raids and aggression against Lebanon.

AL-AHRAM writes that the Israeli Government does not want to admit that what the Israeli Army has done in Lebanon in the past few days is much more than an incident related to the Lebanese-Israeli problems or the Hizballah operations. The paper stresses that such Israeli acts of aggression have a strong effect on the overall effort to find a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It calls on Israel to withdraw from the border strip it is occupying in south Lebanon.

AL-AHRAM then stresses that the coming Israeli elections are preoccupying the Israeli Labor Party leaders so much that it might make them unable to discern strategic priorities in the coming stage or might make the peace process lose much its gains of the previous stage.

Under the headline "U.S. Credibility Is in Danger," AL-AKHBAR writes that the United States has lost its credibility as a neutral mediator in the Middle East peace process following the Security Council's emergency meeting yesterday to discuss the Lebanese complaint of Israeli aggression. It says: The remarkable thing is all these signs from U.S. officials in Washington, even before the Security Council met, confirming the fact that the U.S. Administration under President Bill Clinton has no qualms about or objections to sacrificing its image, credibility, and interests in return for reaffirming its "illogical" support for Israel in its barbaric aggression against Lebanon.

The paper denounces U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's statements siding with the Israeli aggression and his lack of respect for the right of Lebanese civilians to live in peace and safety. It says that Christopher did not even attempt to put up a smokescreen when referring to the large number of women and children among the Lebanese killed and wounded by the barbaric Israeli aggression against Lebanon, which has entered its fifth day, killing 25 and injuring 133.

AL-AKHBAR adds in its editorial that Christopher refrained stating outright that Lebanese territory is being occupied and that it is the right of those who suffer from occupation to resist it. It says that the U.S. persistence in this stand, which cannot be justified logically, confirms that there is an unwritten agreement between the U.S. Administration and the Israeli Government about this hellish cycle of Israeli violence and aggression. The paper stresses that this U.S. stand poses for President Clinton's Administration its greatest possible danger even if its motive is to support Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and the Labor Party in the Israeli elections. It notes that Syria, a vitally important party in the peace process, will be justified in losing any confidence in the United States' role in the peace process, which it claims to be honest and neutral.

For its part, AL-JUMHURIYAH, in an editorial headlined "He Who Plants Thorns Does Not Reap Roses," says that Israel's mentality of pursuing savage violence has not changed despite the gains it made when it showed the olive branch to the Arab countries. It adds that Israel's savage violence and inhuman aggression against Lebanon are continuing for the fifth consecutive day despite the huge losses suffered by innocent Lebanese civilians, who have been displaced by barbaric Israeli raids on their homes that killed dozens of people. It goes on to say: Israel's actions do not surprise those who have followed its history since its establishment in 1948. But what is really surprising is the U.S. stand on the blatant Israeli aggression against Lebanon, a small country that was preoccupied during the past few years with eliminating the consequences of its vicious civil war and which has never taken a warlike stance toward Israel or any other country.

AL-JUMHURIYAH adds: If Israel justifies its criminal actions in Lebanon as a reaction to the Hizballah fighters' rockets, how does Washington justify its support for Israeli aggression at a time when it claims that it is mediating for peace between the Arabs and Israel? It asks disapprovingly: In the U.S. view, does mediation mean bias toward one party that is the aggressor and against the victim of this aggressor? In that case, how can the Arabs henceforth trust U.S. mediation to be impartial?

It adds: The important question now being asked by informed circles in the Middle East is: Have the U.S. policy makers not thought of the consequences of this stand and the danger it poses to their credibility. How can they continue the negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks or even on the Palestinian track in view of this blatant bias?

AL-JUMHURIYAH adds: There is one other important point, namely that he who plants thorns does not reap roses. This applies to Israel's actions against its neighbors. It wants both peace and land and always shouts loudly when the one who is in the right tries to retrieve it from Israel's fangs. It notes that this is what is going on now in the Lebanese arena. Israel is occupying the southern areas of Lebanon and wants to

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continue to plunder its resources, while at the same time it wants the Lebanese to bless its actions and praise its aggression.

Concluding its editorial, the paper stresses that if Israel really wants peace then it must adhere to the requirements of peace and leave the land to its owners. But, it adds, if it persists with its hostile approach, then those who are hesitant about normalizing relations with it will end up refusing to do so. And meanwhile the number of the rejectionists will increase and become stronger no matter how much support Israel gets from the United States or others.

Egypt: Musa Calls On Israel To Join Nonproliferation Treaty

NC1104124596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1215 GMT 11 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Apr (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has called on Israel to join in the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and embark with its Arab neighbors on measures and arrangements leading to the setting up of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East.

In a statement following the signing of a treaty declaring Africa free of nuclear weapons today, Musa said that declaring a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East will considerably enhance the security of the states of the African nuclear-free zone because of the links between security in Africa and the Middle East.

Musa remarked that the signing of this treaty reflects a general consciousness of the danger of nuclear weapons worldwide and of the fact that nuclear weapons cannot guarantee absolute security for any state.

Egypt: Libyan Foreign Minister Denies U.S. Accusations on Factory

NC1204133396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 12 Apr (MENA)—'Umar al-Muntasir, secretary of the Libyan People's General Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation (foreign minister), has praised Egypt's courageous support for Libya concerning allegations that it has a chemical weapons factory.

He was speaking at Cairo airport today before leaving Egypt together with the foreign ministers of Cameroon, Tunisia, Ghana, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, all members of the OAU five-party committee on Lockerbie issue.

Al-Muntasir said the United States fabricated this claim to cover for the radioactive leak from the Israeli nuclear reactor in Dimona and for Israel's practices in southern Lebanon.

He stressed that Egypt's position was brave. Egypt defended Libya as it defends itself, he said. He expressed his country's readiness to receive any delegations to check the allegations on the ground.

The five-party committee is expected to continue its meetings in Tripoli tomorrow, Saturday, to discuss the Libyan-Western crisis known as the Lockerbie crisis.

Egypt: Opposition Paper Criticizes Ferry's Remarks Against Libya

NC1104213096 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 5 Apr 96 pp 1, 8

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At a time when the UN Security Council is continuing its intensive consultations regarding punitive measures against Sudan, U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry has launched a strong media attack on the Libyan Jamahiriyah and threatened a military aggression against Libya for allegedly seeking to produce chemical weapons at a new secret site. After his meeting with President Husni Mubarak on Wednesday [3 April], Perry arrogantly said he offered President Mubarak definite evidence that there is a Libyan program for production of chemical weapons. He said the United States will not allow Libya to open a new weapons plant. He stressed that the United States is not ruling out the use of the military option against Libya, when he said, in reponse to a question by a reporter: "I am not ruling anything out." Perry claimed that the chemical weapons constitute a threat to regional countries such as Egypt.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa left for the Libyan Jamahiriyah yesterday afternoon carrying an urgent message from President Mubarak to Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. Musa's mission was shrouded in absolute secrecy, as he left Cairo aboard a special military plane from Almazah Airport.

Meanwhile a diplomtic source expressed the hope that Musa's mission will succeed in containing the tension created by Washington's blatant threats to Libya.

It has been learned that Cairo has rejected any U.S. military action against Libya on the grounds that it would be a threat to the region's security and might trigger Arab wrath in the region against U.S. interests.

Perry earlier assailed the Islamic movements in the region, primarily the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas. He claimed the objective of these organizations is to halt the peace process, which would affect all the countries of the region — primarily Israel. He noted

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that he and Mubarak discussed what he termed the terrorist threat and cooperation with other countries in this sphere.

In the meantime, the United States strongly assailed the proposal that Egypt put before the Security Council regarding the sanctions on Sudan. Madeleine Albright said the Egyptian proposal was weak and seeks diluted sanctions on Sudan. [passage omitted].

Libya

Libya: Rafsanjani, al-Qadhdhafi Discuss Israeli Raids on Lebanon

LD1304131396 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani telephoned the brother leader of the revolution to discuss the dangerous situation created by the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the destruction of its capital in the full view of a motionless Arab and Islamic worlds.

The Iranian president reiterated during the telephone contact that this wanton Israeli aggression was one of the results of the Sharm al-Shaykh conference, which was held to serve the interest of the Israelis and free their hands to deal blows to the Arab nation, destroy it, and desecrate the Muslim holy shrines in usurped Palestine.

Libya: Official Discusses Israeli 'Aggression' With Lebanese Envoy

LD1304204796 Tripoli JANA in English 1420 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, al Tayr [April] 13, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — The secretary of the General People's Committee for Unity on Thursday [11 April] met with the ambassador of Lebanon to the Great Jamahiriyah reaffirming to him the principled and firm support of the Libyan Arab people for the brotherly Lebanese people in countering the savage and persistent Israeli aggression on the Lebanese territory.

During the meeting, the secretary stressed the need for the Arab countries to adhere to their commitments under the joint pacts and treaties foremost of them the Arab joint defence pact. He called for the implementation of these accords so as to support the Lebanese Arab people and its heroic steadfastness against the Israeli acts of aggression especially after the savage bombing of the enemy warplanes ugainst the southern suburbs of Beirut and led to the martyrdom of many innocents.

Libya: Al-Muntasir—Tarhunah Tunnels Have 'Nothing To Do' With Chemical Weapons

MM1504150896 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Apr 96 p 7

[Report by Muhammad 'Allam: "Al-Muntasir Says: Tarhunah Tunnels Have Nothing To Do With Chemical Weapons"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo — President Husni Mubarak met yesterday with 'Umar al-Muntasir, secretary of the Libyan People's Committee for Foreign Liaison (foreign minister), who told AL-HAYAH that his country "will not beg the United States to apologize to the Libyan people for the 1986 raid." passage omitted on Arab League seven-member committee meeting]

Meanwhile, al-Muntasir has told AL-HAYAH that recent U.S. accusations against his country "are not new. They are a repetition of the scenario of accusations leveled at Libya by the U.S. Administration some years ago regarding the al-Rabitah factory. All these accusations are absolutely baseless."

He added: "The tunnels [in Tarhunah] that Perry is talking about are a normal matter in mountainous areas and are used by Libya to move water and for storage purposes; they have nothing to do with chemical weapons."

He pointed to the existence of U.S. companies operating in Libya and making a profit. He stressed that "the chemical option is out of the question in Libyan policy."

The joint statement issued by the seven-member and five-member committees has stressed the Arab states' and OAU member states' solidarity with Libya and support for the efforts aimed at securing a peaceful solution to the Lockerbie crisis within the framework of the principles of international law and respect for Libyan national sovereignty. [passage omitted]

Libya: Foreign Minister on Inspection Issue, U.S., Other Themes

MM1504114196 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Apr 96 pp 1, 4

[Interview with Libyan Foreign Minister 'Umar al-Muntasir by Sawsan Abu-Husayn in Cairo; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Abu-Husayn] Does Libya agree to the proposal that the Libyan [al-Rabitah] factory be inspected if the United States submits the full evidence to Egypt?

[Al-Muntasir] We have no factories for military or peaceful purposes [as published]. That is unless the

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intention is to inspect the Libyan people's life. The United States provoked a big furor five years ago over the Libyan al-Rabitah factory, and it rejected the inspection proposal accepted by Libya in case the United Nations prepared a negative report that would embarrass the U.S. Administration. It became clear later that the Libyan factory was a pharmaceuticals factory.

[Abu-Husayn] So how do you view the U.S. position and the current escalation against you?

[Al-Muntasir] Everyone is familiar with the U.S. escalation against Libya since 1972. It has continued since Washington refused to initiate a dialogue or establish full diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level with Libya.

[Abu-Husayn] Which is to blame: Libya's policy or the U.S. Administration's policy?

[Al-Muntasir] We have not erred against the West. We are defending our interests. This defense is usually interpreted as harming their interests.

[Abu-Husayn] Would you once again demand a dialogue with the U.S. Administration to clarify the interests and the harm and to look for common denominators in order to secure a stable relationship removed from escalation and tension in the region?

[Al-Muntasir] We always urge dialogue with all world states whenever there is confusion or misunderstanding over any issue, be it a political, economic, or security issue. It is a fixed Libyan policy: dialogue and respect for other states' sovereignty. However, we declare our rejection of dialogue with Israel, and this is the cause of the anger at Libya's policy.

[Abu-Husayn] What is your position on the Dimona reactor and current concerns over its dangers?

[Al-Muntasir] Colonel al-Qadhdhafi has in the past warned about that reactor and its dangers. Even the earthquakes which occur from time to time in Egypt, Israel, al-'Aqabah, and Jordan are caused by the Dimona reactor. But no one believed us. So we were content with the warning, especially as the reactor harms Egypt and Israel before Libya.

[Abu-Husayn] What is your opinion of the African states' signing of the Declaration on a Nuclear-Free Africa?

[Al-Muntasir] Libya announced its position some years ago on the importance of removing all types of mass-destruction weapons from the Middle East and Africa. This is proved by my participation in the signing, especially as we believe that this position protects Africa from destructive weapons.

[Abu-Husayn] Does Libya believe that Arab states should possess nuclear weapons like Israel?

[Al-Muntasir] Yes, the Arab states are entitled to possess all weapons which are available in the world and which are in Israel's possession. If these weapons are available to the United States and other states, why should the Arabs not acquire them? And to prevent Israel from threatening us with such a dangerous weapon, we should possess the same weapon.

[Abu-Husayn] Libya called for an Arab summit recently. Which states have responded to your call?

[Al-Muntasir] I will discuss the matter with the Arab League secretary general, especially as Libya submitted its request to him.

Libya: 10th Anniversary of U.S. Raid Declared Day of 'Mourning'

LD1304152396 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A day of national mourning will be observed throughout the Great Jamahiriyah tomorrow, 14 April, to mark the magnitude of the injustice against the Libyan Arab people, its land, and its property in the wake of the flagrant aggression carried out by the outrageous NATO forces against its children 10 years ago tomorrow.

Citizens will, therefore, be trying tomorrow to depict the magnitude of the terrorism being carried out by evil and tyrannical forces against innocent people and the true image of the state-terrorism committed by the NATO-American forces against the people of the Great Jamahiriyah by wearing black clothes throughout the day or by wearing black symbols on their clothes.

Also, black signs will also be attached to all public and private means of transport. All flights, travel by road, and sea crossings by publicly owned companies, inside the Great Jamahiriyah or between the latter and foreign countries, will be halted. All postal, telephone, and wire communications between the great Jamahiriyah and the outside world will come to a halt. All gas stations will refrain from selling fuel tomorrow.

Observing the day of national mourning also means that no Libyan citizen should travel to Britain or England on this day. [Libyan] owned travel agencies anywhere in the world and foreign travel agencies inside the Great Jamahiriyah must not issue tickets to Libyan nationals to travel to these two countries during the period of mourning. The same also applies to tickets for sea crossings if arrivals will be during the period of mourning.

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Thus, the day of national mourning is meant to be a day to expose the magnitude of the crazy-terrorism, which has become the main feature of the American-NATO outrageous policies against peoples and to expose the true meaning of the rancorous racist policies against the Arab nation and the Islamic world in a bid help them understand that the words human rights in the book of these evil forces does not apply to Arabs. Rather, their claims with regards to human rights are merely used to show disdain to the sons of the Arab and Islamic nation, who are the target of their scheming, which aims at occupying their lands, usurping their resources, and desecrating their holy places.

Libya: Indictment Prepared Against U.S. Officials Who Planned Raid

LD1504121096 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1030 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 15 Apr — The Public Prosecutor's Office of the Great Jamahiriyah has announced that it is currently preparing a bill of indictment regarding the legal nature of the crime committed against the Libyan Arab people and finding the judicial organization which will look into this case. This is on the basis of the claim submitted by the association of the victims of the failed, barbarous NATO-U.S. aggression against the Great Jamahiriyah.

This was announced in a statement read at the great public rally that took place at the house of the brother leader of the revolution to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Libyan Arab people's brave confrontation with that aggression. It was announced that the public prosecutor's office has investigated this crime.

Here is the text of the statement:

On the basis of the claim submitted by the association of the victims of the U.S. raid on the civilian quarters of Tripoli and Benghazi, which claimed the lives of numbers of old people, children, and women, the Public Prosecutor's Office has investigated that crime.

In spite of the noncooperation of the concerned authorities that participated in that aggression, had information about it, from whose territories the aggression started, or who participated in any shape or form in it, the Public Prosecutor's Office was able to obtain some documents, information, and testimony of witnesses concerning the culprits of that crime and is currently engaged in gathering these documents and evidence and in completing what could be added to the file in preparation for issuing a bill of indictment which would explain the legal nature of that crime and determine the judicial organization which will be responsible for looking into the case.

Since this crime has been proven and there is no doubt about it, there is nothing left for the public prosecutor's office to do except to add some documents, such as the final reports by experts, and prepare the final list of witnesses for the prosecution.

The Public Prosecutor's Office appeals to all the authorities concerned who claim to support democracy and apply law, to cooperate with the judicial authorities of the Great Jamahiriyah, particularly in handing over those accused of committing this crime, the pilots, engineers, and technicians who implemented this raid, and also those counsellors in the White House, Pentagon, CIA, and U.S. State Department who planned this operation. In case of noncooperation, the judicial authorities will resort to implementing all international legal means through the legal international organizations and bodies to achieve this aim.

On the other hand, the association of children, old people, and women victims is currently taking the legal measures to issue a civil law case, on the basis of the penal claim, asking for compensation for the damages inflicted on them.

Libya: JANA Condemns U.S. for 1986 'Aggression'

LD1404210296 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1620 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tripoli, 14 Apr (JANA): On the 14 April 1986, America perpetrated its perfidious aggression against the Great Jamahiriyah using the most modern weapons of its NATO military arsenal and more than 170 war planes. It bombarded the Arab Libyan towns in the heart of darkness, killing women, children, and old people, in the biggest terrorist crime modern human history had witnessed.

The Libyan news agency's domestic affairs commentator criticized this appalling crime committed by America against this people under excuses which afterwards proved for the whole world to be groundless.

The commentator indicated that the whole world remembers that America, at that time, justified this aggression by saying that Libya was responsible for the attack against a nightclub in Berlin in Germany.

Great Britain took part in this aggression under the pretext that Libya was behind the assassination of the British policewoman outside the Arab Libyan People's bureau headquarters in London in 1984.

Officially, it turned out afterwards that the Great Jamahiriyah was innocent from bombing the Berlin's nightclub and also from assassinating the British policewoman. But it was confirmed that the American

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intelligence services were involved in the shooting by documents and evidence irrefutable for experts and scientists. The commentator said: 'Therefore, the peoples of the world daily discover that the Great Jamahiriyah has always been the victim of America's lies, deception, and slander.' [passage omitted] The commentator refers to the UN General Assembly resolution adopted overwhelmingly on 20 November 1986 condemning this aggression and establishing the Great Jamahiriyah's right for a just compensation for the human and material losses suffered by the Arab Libyan people during this aggression. He stressed that this international organization has no more excuse, after this, to delay for one moment the implementation of this resolution and assume its full responsibilities vis-a-vis this issue. The Libyan news agency's domestic affairs commentator concluded by stressing that the most appalling forms of organized state terrorism were represented in a state bombarding cities inhabited by peaceful citizens, killing innocent children, women, and old people, on the basis of accusations which proved to be wrong, unjust, and fabricated. Today, this bears witness to the truth of our stand and our choices and to the injustice and bias which made us the victim of lies and fabrications on the part of the mightiest tenor of terrorism and tyranny in the world today.

Libya: OAU Lockerbie Mediation Commission Arrives in Tripoli

LD1204205796 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The African ministerial commission mediating between the parties to the so-called Lockerbie Affair, set up by the OAU and which includes the foreign ministers of five countries — Ghana, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Uganda, and Tunisia — and the deputy secretary general of the OAU, arrived in Tripoli this afternoon.

The Ghanain Foreign Minister, Obed Asamoah, made a statement to JANA about this visit. He said that the visit by the commission is within the framework of the efforts being deployed by the OAU to find a solution to the so-called Lockerbie Affair. He added that the commission has taken a number of initiatives since its inception. One of these initiatives was to visit the Great Jamahiriyah to examine this issue. That visit was followed by one to New York to discuss the issue with the UN Security Council. We have made some progress as the countries we talked to showed interest in this subject. Two countries, the United States and Britain, are hindering any progress down this path. For this reason we decided that it was better that we coordinate our efforts and those of the seven-member commission of the Arab League.

A meeting was held yesterday in Cairo between the seven-country Arab Commission and the five-country African Commission. The two commissions examined ways of resolving the dispute during the meeting. We decided to hold another meeting in the Great Jamahiriyah to define a work plan for the commission. The other reason for our presence here is to express our support for the Great Jamahiriyah.

We hope that in our meeting here we will discover ideas that will help us find a solution to this crisis. The Cairo meeting examined several suggestions which the commission will discuss further.

Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi Receives African Committee on Lockerbie

LD1304140896 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The brother leader of the revolution [al-Qadhdhafi] received today Dr. Obed Asamoah, the Ghanaian foreign minister; the Zimbabwean Foreign Minister Stanley Mudenge; Agard Didi, Ugandan minister of state for foreign affairs; Brother Said Benmostafa, Tunisian secretary of state attached to the foreign minister in charge of Maghreb affairs; and Daniel Antonio, OAU assistant secretary for political affairs, who are all members of the five-man African committee set up by the OAU to follow up and find a just solution to the so-called the Lockerbie case.

Members of the five-man ministerial African committee reiterated to the brother leader of the revolution the African countries' full solidarity with the Great Jamahiriyah in its confrontation with the imposed unjust measures. The committee highly praised the Great Jamahiriyah's positive and constructive initiatives and its civilized handling of this case.

The meeting was attended by the brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation and the brother secretary general of African affairs at the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation.

It is worth recalling that the five-man African committee has been exerting tireless efforts to find a solution to the so-called Lockerbie case. [passage omitted]

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Libya: Tripoli Invites Britain To Reconsider Normalization of Relations

LD1404121796 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1110 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 14 April — The General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation has addressed a memorandum to the department dealing with British interests at the Italian embassy in the Great Jamahiriyah, inviting Britain to consider the importance of re-establishing normal relations with the Great Jamahiriyah, this following the emergence of the truth about the killing of the policewoman, Yvonne Fletcher, which was the direct cause for the severance of the diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation drew attention to the facts as published by the newspaper, THE GUARDIAN, and shown in the documentary broadcast by Channel Four. Both clearly showed that the killer is a member of the U.S. intelligence services and that the aim behind the incident was to push Britain towards cutting off its relations with the Great Jamahiriyah and abandon its interests and relationship with her. This Worked in favor of the U.S. anti-Libyan policy and against British interests.

The General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation expressed in its memorandum its hope that positive and effective steps leading to the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries would soon be taken.

The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation had already stressed during a press conference held in Cairo the fact that after evidence had proved that Libya had no involvement in the case of the British policewoman, Britain should now re-establish its relations with Libya and severe its relations with the United States.

Morocco

Morocco: Lebanese Prime Minister Arrives in Fes

LD1504135796 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri arrived a short time ago in Fes on a visit to Morocco from Paris. [passage omitted] At Fes-Sais airport, Mr. Rafiq al-Hariri said:

[Begin al-Hariri recording] We came to Morocco because it is a friendly country and a country which participated in the al-Ta'if agreement, which was aimed at ending the war in Lebanon. [words indistinct] [end recording]

Morocco: Al-Hariri—Hassan Promises To Intervene on Lebanon's Behalf

LD1504212896 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri left our country this evening. In a statement to the press before his departure, he said:

[Begin Hariri recording] We held talks with His Majesty King Hassan II, and we hope that they will be fruitful. His majesty promised to make the necessary contacts to stop the fighting and the assault on civilians in Lebanon that is being carried out by Israel. We are hoping for the best, God willing. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Sudan

Sudan: OAU Head Sees Possible UN Sanctions on Sudan

NC1604082996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0615 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 16 Apr (MENA)—OAU Secretary General Salem Ahmad Salem has said that the OAU has given Sudan enough time to resolve the crisis centered on handing over the three defendants involved in the attempt to assassinate President Husni Mubarak and to cooperate with the international community. We do not want to see Sudan suffer from international sanctions that could be taken within the next few days.

In an interview with AL-AHRAM published today, he said that the attempt on President Mubarak's life should not be regarded as a problem between Ethiopia and Sudan or between Egypt and Sudan but a problem that concerns all the African leaders because it was in fact an attempt on them all since it happened while they were attending the African summit.

Salem went on to say: Even though the attackers failed, the message was clear. It was simply a crime, not just against President Mubarak, but against the OAU. This is why we want to know the identity of those responsible for this vile crime so as to insure justice and to punish them.

The OAU secretary general added: That is why I recently went to Sudan for the third time for the OAU to convince Sudan to respond to the international resolutions. I met with officials there; they told me that they want to bring these defendants to justice but do not know their whereabouts.

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Salem noted that if international sanctions are imposed on Sudan, it will inflict heavy damage on the Sudanese people and will be a catastrophe from which no one escapes. It will paralyze all the active forces in Sudan's society.

Sudan: Opposition Links Iranian Base in Arkawit, Arms Funding

EA1304145496 (Clandestine) Voice of Sudan Voice of the National Democratic Alliance in Arabic 0400 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our sources inside the country have said that the Iranian Government has completed construction of a large base for the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in Arkawit area, eastern Sudan, near the Red Sea coast. This is part of the implementation of the strategic agreement between the government of the National islamic Front [NIF] party and Iran. The government of the NIF party has granted facilities to the Iranian Navy and other military facilities in return for Iranian Government financing of arms deals which the NIF government contracted with China and a number of Republics of the former Soviet Union. The command of this base is supervised by General Diya, Commandant Mustafa Abbas, 'Abd-al-Sahib al-Mansibi, and Muhammad al-Ansari from Iran.

Tunisia

Tunisia: Foreign Ministry Expresses Concern Over Lebanon Escalation

LD1304180696 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Foreign Ministry has issued the following statement: Tunisia is observing with utmost concern the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon following the continuous Israeli air raids against towns, villages, and south Beirut causing the death of civilians. This suggests a return to practices contrary to the spirit of the peace process and a violation of international norms with likely negative consequences on peace in the region.

Tunisia is expressing its concern over the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East resulting from the blockade imposed on the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank and particularly from the current escalation between Israel and Lebanon, the delay of peace negotiations on all fronts, and the latest suicide operations.

It [Tunisia] is urging all parties to the peace process in the region to restrain themselves, embrace the values of peace, and contribute to international efforts in order to overcome this crisis and face up to these negative developments so the peace process in the Middle East can be saved and the parties can protect themselves from the risks of failure.

Tunisia: 'Arafat Arrives in Tunis for Discussions With Ben Ali

JN1504191996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat held talks with Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali today. The talks dealt with latest developments resulting from the continuation of the Israeli siege against Palestine and the failure of Tel Aviv to commit itself to the agreements it concluded with the PLO.

The president arrived in the Tunisian capital this afternoon. He was received at Carthage International Airport by Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia and a large number of Tunisian officials.

The president will visit Cairo for similar talks with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak on the dangers to the peace process as a result of the continuation of the Israeli siege and Tel Aviv's violation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreements.

Tunisia: President Ben Ali, 'Arafat Discuss Israeli Blockade

LD1504215696 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali met Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat this afternoon at Carthage Palace. President 'Arafat expressed his pleasure at being in Tunisia, which has been and is still hosting the PLO, and has stood by us, be it the president, government, or people — particularly President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who has stood by the Palestinian issue and the Palestinian people with all his ability and strength.

President Yasir 'Arafat added that the meeting was positive, constructive, and important, and it enabled him to brief the president on the hardship faced by the Palestinian people as a result of the blockade imposed by Israel.

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GCC: Secretary General Condemns 'Aggression' Against Lebanon

LD1404192496 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1815 GMT 14 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 14 Apr — The Gulf Cooperation Council's [GCC] general-secretariat expressed its condemnation and denunciation of the Israeli aggression against Southern Lebanon and the Lebanese capital, Beirut.

This came today in a press statement by his highness, GCC Secretary General Jamil Ibrahim al-Hujaylan.

His highness indicated that the general-secretariat was following with serious concern the continuous aggressions against southern Lebanon and the Lebanese capital, Beirut.

The general-secretariat condemns these land, air, and sea repeated attacks, the victims of which are children, old people, and civilians, and calls on Israel to stop these attacks and respect Lebanon's sovereignty, independence, and security. [passage omitted]

Bahrain

Bahrain: Government Condemns Israeli 'Aggression' Against Lebanon

JN1404194396 Manama Bahrain Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the prime minister, presided over the regular weekly meeting of the Council of Ministers this morning.

After the meeting, Muhammad Ibrahim al-Mutawwa', minister of cabinet affairs and information, said: His highness the prime minister began the meeting by briefing the council on the contents of a message to His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the beloved amir of the country, from his brother His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the sisterly United Arab Emirates. The message deals with bilateral relations and consultations between the two countries on various developments and issues of mutual concern.

The council hailed the strong relations between the two sisterly states and peoples and the continuous progress in their joint cooperation.

The prime minister then reviewed the developments in the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. The council expressed its condemnation of the aggression, which represents a violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and international charters and norms. It also represents an aggression against the innocent and obstructs the Middle East peace process.

The council called for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for Israel's unconditional withdrawal from all the territory it is occupying in southern Lebanon. [passage committed]

Kuwait

Kuwait: Official Tells U.S. Envoy of 'Concern' Over Israeli Action

LD1404153596 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1400 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 14 Apr (KUNA) — Sulayman al-Shahin, under secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, held a meeting today with U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait Ryan Crocker, and expressed to him Kuwait's concern about the "very dangerous situation" resulting from the Israeli military aggression against Lebanon.

A responsible source in the Foreign Affairs Ministry has informed KUNA that al-Shahin stressed during the meeting that it is important for the United States to make great to stop the Israeli military aggression swiftly. He pointed out the seriousness of the acts of aggression, which have killed innocent civilians.

The same source said that al-Shahin stressed during the meeting the necessity of the enforcement of UN Security Council Resolution No. 425, which stipulates an end to the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon. [passage omitted]

Kuwait: Official Discusses Israeli 'Aggression' With Lebanon Envoy

LD1504100796 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0909 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait City, 15 Apr — Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Sulayman Majid al-Shahin met here today Lebanese Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Muhammad Isa.

In a statement made to KUNA, the Foreign Ministry said "the meeting dealt with the dangerous developments taking place in Lebanon as a result of the repeated Israeli acts of aggression on its territories."

The statement added that the two men discussed "Lebanon's call to the Arab League to hold an emergency session at the ministerial level. They also discussed coordination between the two sister countries on the subject."

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Kuwait: Foreign Minister Receives European Troika Delegation

LD1504205696 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, the first deputy prime minister and foreign affairs minister, said today that the Israeli military operation against Lebanon is a major obstacle to the peace process. He stressed the need for security and stability, which will pave the way for a comprehensive, just, and realistic solution to the Middle East conflict.

This came in a meeting held by the first deputy prime minister and foreign affairs minister with the European Troika led by (Ludovico Camerana), the undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry of the Italian Republic.

A responsible source from the Foreign Ministry informed KUNA that the European delegation had briefed Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad on their current tour in the Middle East, which consisted of finding the best way to promote peace in the Middle East and to prepare for the ministerial meeting due to be held in Brussels on 22 April.

Kuwait: UN Envoy Calls For Measures To End Israeli 'Aggression'

LD1604090996 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0740 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 16 Apr (KUNA) — Kuwait has called on the UN Security Council to adopt all the necessary measures to put an end immediately to aggression and to use all available means to exert pressure on Israel to withdraw from the occupied Lebanese territories in implementation of its Resolution No. 425 for 1987.

In his address to the Council last night, Mohamed Abu al-Hasan, the Kuwaiti representative to the United Nations, emphasized that Kuwait "condemns the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and announces its full solidarity with the fraternal Lebanese people and their government, and calls on the council to adopt all measures necessary to put an end immediately to that aggression."

During the meeting, which did not end in adopting any resolution on the Israeli aggression on Lebanon, the Kuwaiti representative appealed to the two sponsors of peace in the Middle East, Russia and the United States, not to let the hopes based on the Madrid conference dwindle and to concentrate on the essence of that conference, which is land for peace.

Abu al-Hasan stressed Kuwait's commitment to the peace process in the Middle East. He said the peace process "will not be fulfilled unless the peace is comprehensive, just, not restricted to one course with the exclusion of others, and not accepting half measures. Peace should also be the peace of partners in a process aimed at equality in security, stability, and economic development without hegemony or favoritism."

Kuwait: Visiting Iranian Minister Criticizes Israeli Actions

LD1404191196 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1649 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 14 Apr (KUNA) — An Iranian official, who arrived in Kuwait today on an official visit, has strongly criticized Israel for calling on the Lebanese resistance to halt attacks while it continues its occupation to southern Lebanon with the current military attacks.

The Iranian official, Morteza Sarmadi who is Iran's deputy foreign minister for communications, said that he was surprised that "Israel makes calls regarding its security and stability while it occupies other people's lands and persists in attacking them."

Sarmadi said that during his three-day visit to Kuwait he would deliver a message from his country's President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to His Highness Shyakh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, amir of Kuwait. [passage omitted]

The Iranian official attacked Israeli and Western justification for the Israeli attacks caused by Hizballah's operations which he described as "legitimate acts" and wondered "why America was supporting Israel and not the Lebanese in liberating their lands?"

Regarding his visit to Kuwait and the mutual relations with it, he said that "they are developed, wide, and good." He said that he would discuss with the Kuwaiti officials the situation in the region and deliver a message from Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati to the first deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad. [passage omitted]

Kuwait: Diplomatic Relations Established With Mozambique

LD1404161996 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1421 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 14 Apr — It has been announced today that Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and prime minister, will pay an official visit on 22 April both to the Moroccan Kingdom and to the Tunisian Republic at the head of a delegation composed of a number of ministers and high ranking officials. [passage omitted]

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On the other hand, the [Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Minister of Planning, 'Abd-al-'Aziz] al-Dakhil, has announced that the cabinet has agreed to establish diplomatic relations between the state of Kuwait and the Republic of Mozambique, this is in accordance with Kuwait's policy which aims to extend and strengthen its relations with other states. [passage omitted]

Qatar

Qatar: Foreign Ministry Condemns Israeli Lebanon Attacks

JN1304132496 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Doha, 13 Apr (WAKH) — The State of Qatar condemned the recent Israeli military aggressions against Lebanon.

The QATARI NEWS AGENCY quoted a responsible source at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs today as saying that the State of Qatar believes that these aggressions are in violation of Lebanon's sovereignty. Besides, these aggressions jeopardize Lebanon's security and stability. They could obstruct the peace process, further aggravate regional tension, and endanger world peace and security, the source added.

The State of Qatar urged Israel to abandon the policy of violence, which will beget counterviolence, which cannot promote the regional peace process. Qatar stresses the need to find a solution to all outstanding issues peacefully, the source concluded.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Riyadh Seeks Implementation of UN Resolution 425 for Lebanon

LD1504192996 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz today chaired a meeting of the Council of Ministers. [passage omitted]

The Council expressed its deep concern over the continuing Israeli air raids against fraternal Lebanon, and stressed that violence bred only violence. It also underlined that implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425 was liable to bring about security and stability in the region. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia: Riyadh Expresses 'Grave Concern' Over Israeli Raids

LD1304122396 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has expressed its grave concern over the Israeli air raids against Lebanon.

This was in a statement by an official source at the Foreign Ministry. He said these raids by the Israeli Air Force against Lebanon are a violation of Lebanon's sovereignty, are aggression against its land and security, and defiance of the international legitimacy, according to Security Council Resolution 435, which demands Israel withdraw from the Lebanese lands unconditionally.

The source said in a statement to the Saudi news agency [SPA] that the continuation of Israeli raids against Lebanon will lead to more trouble and violence while the Kingdom aspires for comprehensive, full, and just peace to prevail throughout the entire region.

The official source at the Foreign Ministry has asserted the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is standing by Lebanon in its defense of its lands and preservation of Lebanese citizens' safety and security.

Saudi Arabia: Foreign Minister Holds Talks With Lebanese Envoy

LD1404185096 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1740 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 14 Apr: His Royal Highness, Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister, today received in his office Doctor Zuhayr Hamdan, the Lebanese ambassador to the kingdom. During the meeting, bilateral and regional relations of common interest were discussed. His highness expressed to the ambassador the kingdom of Saudi Arabia's condemnation and denunciation of the Israeli aggressions against Lebanon, which were a violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and an aggression against its territorial sanctity. His highness also confirmed Saudi Arabia's intention of standing by Lebanon in its defense of its territory and in preservation of its safety and security. He added that the continuation of the Israeli raids against Lebanon could lead to additional perturbations, trouble, and acts of violence at a time when Saudi Arabia was looking forward to see a comprehensive, total, and just peace prevail in all areas of the region. [passage omitted]

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Saudi Arabia: Foreign Minister Tells Envoy of Support for Lebanon

LD1404125196 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister, received Dr. Zuhayr Hamdan, the Lebanese ambassador to the Kingdom, in his office today. Bilateral and regional relations of common interest were examined at the meeting.

His royal highness expressed to the Lebanese ambassador Saudi Arabia's denunciation of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, which is a violation of the sovereignty of Lebanon and an act of aggression against its territorial integrity. His royal highness stressed the support of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for Lebanon in its defense of its territory and its protection of its security. The pursuit of the Israeli attacks against Lebanon is likely to lead to an increase in instability and violent acts at a time when the Kingdom is hoping that a comprehensive and just peace will be established throughout the region.

The meeting was also attended by Ambassador 'Abdallah Bin-Muhammad al-Harithi, the head of the Arab affairs department at the Foreign Ministry.

Saudi Arabia: Foreign Ministry Condemns Israeli Raids on Lebanon

LD1304235196 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2230 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expressed its strong concern vis-a-vis the Israeli air raids on Lebanon. This came in a statement from a responsible source at the Foreign Ministry, in which he indicated that these raids by the Israeli Air Force on Lebanon are a violation of Lebanon's sovereignty, an aggression against its territory's sanctity and safety, and a challenge to international legality, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 425, which calls on Israel to withdraw from the Lebanese territories without any restriction or condition. In a statement to SPA, the source stressed that the continuation of the Israeli raids on Lebanon is likely to lead to additional trouble, perturbations, and acts of violence at a time when the Kingdom is looking forward to seeing a comprehensive, full, and just peace set up in all areas of the region. The responsible source at the Saudi Foreign Ministry confirmed that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stands by Lebanon in its defense of its territories and the preservation of the Lebanese citizens's safety and security.

Saudi Arabia: Crown Prince Receives Lebanese Prime Minister

LD1604140696 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri was received by His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, crown prince, deputy prime minister and commander of the National Guard, in his office at the al-Salam Palace today. The meeting was attended by Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-Ibrahim al-Mani', minister of state and member of the Council of Ministers, and by 'Abd al-Muhsin Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Tuwayjiri, adviser to the crown prince's office.

The Lebanese prime minister arrived in Jeddah last night on a visit to the kingdom. He was greeted at King 'Abd-al-'Aziz International Airport by Dr. 'Abd-al-Aziz Bin-Ibrahim al-Mani', a representative of Royal Protocol, and a number of other officials.

United Arab Emirates

UAE: Deputy Prime Minister Denounces Israeli Attacks

JN1404125096 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1130 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi, 14 Apr (WAKH)—Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, United Arab Emirates [UAE] prime minister, today received Amar Mekhloufi, Algerian minister of energy and mines and current OPEC chairman.

They exchanged views on developments in the oil market and OPEC activities.

Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan stressed that the UAE is keen to support OPEC in order to ensure stability in the oil market and the continuity of the organization.

He said the UAE has the right to increase its production quota like any other OPEC member state if there is a need to raise the current OPEC production ceiling of 24.52 million barrels a day.

Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan also received Ian Lang, British secretary of state for trade and industry. They discussed economic and commercial ties between the two countries and the means to improve and strengthen them. They also discussed the prospects for this cooperation in the future.

Shaykh Sultan also received General Joseph Hoar, former commander of the U.S. troops in the Gulf and member of the Foreign Relations Council for Middle East Affairs. They discussed current developments in

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the Middle East, the U.S.-sponsored peace process, and developments in the Gulf region.

Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan underlined the need to establish just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and on all tracks.

His highness denounced Israel's attacks against the Lebanese people and stressed the need to apply the UN Security Council resolutions concerning the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from the Lebanese territory. His highness said increasing tension in the region will not serve the Middle East region.

Yemen

Yemen: Salih Telephones Lebanese President, Condemns Israeli Raids

JN1404200496 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Television Network in English 1930 GMT 14 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The president of the Republic, General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, has called the Lebanese president, Ilyas al-Hirawi, to express his deep concerns over the situation caused by the vicious Israeli attacks on the Lebanese people.

The president expressed the country's condemnation of the Israeli air raids and shelling and confirmed Yemen's solidarity with the leadership, government, and the people of Lebanon against the Israeli aggression, which he said constitutes a flagrant violation of the sovereignty and independence of Lebanon.

Yemen: Foreign Minister Receives Iraqi, Lebanese Ambassadors

JN1504200996 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, received brother Dr. Muhsin Khalil Ibrahim, Iraqi ambassador in Sanaa. They discussed relations between the two sisterly countries.

The minister also received Hasan Salim Birru, Lebanese ambassador in Sanaa. The two sides discussed the brutal Israeli acts of aggression against Lebanon. The foreign minister reiterated the support of the Yemeni leadership, government, and people for the fraternal Lebanese people against this treacherous aggression. The Lebanese ambassador expressed appreciation for our country's stand and our solidarity with our brothers in Lebanon against the brute Israeli aggression.

Yemen: Foreign Ministry Condemns Israeli 'Act of Terrorism'

JN1204204696 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible Foreign Ministry source today expressed the Republic of Yemen's denunciation and condemnation of the Israeli aggression against fraternal Lebanon. In a statement to the YEMENI NEWS AGENCY, SABA', the source said this aggression is a flagrant violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and independence and a serious threat to the peace process in the region.

The source expressed the Republic of Yemen's solidarity with the fraternal Lebanese people against this act of terrorism by Israel. The source also called on the international community to pressure the Israeli authorities to stop their aggression and to avoid the unjustified military escalation which generates reactions and tension which do not serve security and stability in the region.

Yemen: Salih Addresses Message to U.S. on Crisis With Eritrea

JN1304133596 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the republic, received today U.S. Ambassador David Newton and asked him to convey a message to the U.S. Administration.

The message deals with bilateral relations and developments in the Red Sea region resulting from the Eritrean occupation of the Yemeni Hanish al-Kabir island. The message also discusses Eritrea's failure so far to respond to the mediation efforts to solve the problem peacefully, causing threats to security, stability, and peace in the region.

Discussions at the meeting dealt with a number of issues of bilateral concern.

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Iraq: Oil-for-Food Talks With UN To Resume 'Late This Evening'

JN1504194296 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Iraqi and UN delegations will hold a meeting late this evening, New York time, as part of the third round of their talks on oil-for-food, medicine, and other basic needs. The two delegations met for two hours and agreed to resume meeting this evening.

In statements to journalists, Muhammad Zijari, the UN coordinator in Baghdad, who went to New York to follow the meetings, expressed hope that the current meetings between Iraq and the United Nations will produce satisfactory results.

Iraq: UN Coordinator in Baghdad Notes Conditions in Country

JN1504204196 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1950 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] New York, 15 Apr (INA)—[passage omitted] Muhammad Zijari, the UN coordinator in Baghdad, said the Iraqi people need for food and medicine is extensive due to the deterioration of humanitarian conditions over the last past two years.

In statements to journalists at the United Nations today, Zijari said that despite the fact that the results of the current talks will be decisive, they will not cover all the needs of the Iraqi people — only a significant part of these needs.

Zijari said he hopes that the current talks between Iraq and the United Nations will yield positive results.

He noted that the health sector in Iraq has suffered great stress as a result of the increasing number of malnutrition cases and the lack of medicine and medical equipment.

He said the agricultural and educational sectors in Iraq were harmed as a result of the shortage in agricultural equipment, fertilizers, and the necessary school equipment.

The UN coordinator added that between 22 and 29 percent of Iraq's 20 million people suffer from malnutrition and children under five suffer from various disease and are underweight.

Zijari is in New York to consult with the UN delegation that is holding talks with an Iraqi delegation.

Iraq: APFC Denounces 'Zionist Aggression' Against Lebanon

JN1304164196 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1400 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 13 Apr (INA)—The General Secretariat of the Arab Popular Forces Conference [APFC] denounced the flagrant Zionist aggression against southern Lebanon and Beirut, the perpetration of the most hideous crimes, and the expulsion of peaceful citizens from their homes.

In a statement to INA, APFC Secretary General Sa'd Qasim Hammudi said: The Zionist aggression, which targeted eastern and southern Lebanon and the capital Beirut, and resulted in the displacement of thousands of Lebanese families, is new evidence of the Zionist disdain for the Arab nation and an attempt to impose hegemony on its territories at a time when the Arabs suffer from the absence of true and serious solidarity.

He called on the Arab popular forces, parties, organizations, and trade unions, to denounce the repeated Zionist aggressions against Lebanon, to express their solidarity with the fraternal Lebanese people, and to call for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution No. 425 which calls on the Zionist entity to withdraw from southern Lebanon, so that Lebanon can restore its sovereignty over its territory.

Iraq: Paper Condemns Israel's 'Total War' Against Lebanon

JN1404121496 Baghdad INA in English 1030 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, April 14, INA—An Iraqi paper condemned the total war which is being launched by Israel with U.S. support against Lebanon which caused the killing of tens of innocent civilians and making thousands of them homeless.

In an article issued today, AL-JUMHURIYAH said the U.S.-Zionist connivance in this war proves clearly that U.S. is the real planner of the aggression against Lebanon and embodies the fact of U.S. being the first and dangerous enemy of Arab and Muslims and the Zionist entity is only a tool used by the U.S. to fulfill its motives.

The paper pointed out, Israel is launching the new aggression against Lebanon under the pretext of the Lebanese national resistance operations against the Israeli forces in southern Lebanon.

It said this pretext is a false one for two reasons, the first one is the Lebanese resistance operations are legitimate and necessary since they are against the Israeli forces,

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and the second reason is the Security Council has issued resolution 425 which demanded Israel to withdraw its forces from southern Lebanon.

Iraq: Lebanon Raids Called 'Continuation' of '30-State Aggression'

JN1504092096 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0603 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 15 Apr (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH described the criminal Zionist aggression against Lebanon, which enjoys Washington's blessing, as an "all-out war targeted against all the Lebanese without discrimination" and a new link in the anti-Arab aggression.

In an article today, the paper, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, adds: This flagrant aggression reflects the Zionists' ingrained malice toward the Arabs, as well as their endeavors to arrest their quest for progress.

The paper goes on to say: The ongoing attacks on Lebanon are a continuation of the 30-state aggression on the Iraqi people in terms of the devastating ill will and the plan to strike at the Arab sides confronting the hybrid Zionist entity.

Had it not been for the absence of an Arab power that is capable of cutting it to size, and had it not been for the Arabs' disunity and fragmentation, thanks to the hegemonic U.S. influence, the Zionist enemy would not have dared to launch such a large-scale aggression against Lebanon, which is similar to the imperialist onslaught against Iraq.

Unchallenged, the Zionist enemy's planes, battleships, heavy artillery, and missiles are killing the Lebanese people and destroying their cities. Meanwhile, Arab doors are being opened to promote Zionist influence. The United States is being granted facilities on Arab territory so that it may launch aggression against Iraq or provide additional protection to the Zionist entity.

AL-THAWRAH goes on to say: The Zionist entity feels that its dastardly crimes will go unpunished, thanks to the U.S. Administration, which is playing a dirty role to cover up its crimes against the Lebanese people, which have been continuing for the past four days.

The paper says: Nobody knows when the aggression will come to a halt. This is because the declared war will remain open until the last Lebanese who bore arms against the Zionist occupation of Lebanon is killed. This campaign is aimed at decimating all those who are opposed to capitulatory policies, which are being pursued through coercion, intimidation, and misrepresentation of views.

Maintaining silence over Zionist crimes against the Arab nation and involvement in capitulatory solutions will encourage enemies to proceed along this suspicious criminal path and prompt them to go to excess in antagonizing all Arabs, the paper maintains.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: The Arabs are called upon, now more than ever before, to demonstrate real solidarity, and to awaken to the facts, which would solidify their stand at present and in the future. Otherwise, everybody would be threatened with a campaign similar to the one currently targeting Lebanon.

Iraq: Saddam Husayn Presides Over Cabinet Session

JN1404192896 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1713 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 14 Apr (INA)—We should discuss all issues, whether they are economic, industrial, or social, clearly so that our decisions will be practical and serve society, said President Saddam Husayn, commenting on a report presented at the Council of Ministers' 15th session.

The ministers expressed their pride in the results of the president's blessed tours and his meetings with citizens, in terms of the enlightened response to his excellency's direct instructions to the citizens on social solidarity and their contribution to their cities and quarters. The ministers said that the results reflect positively on interaction between the state and citizens and that wealthier citizens have contributed to this.

In a debate on the economic situation and enhancing our people's steadfastness and faith in the face of the unjust blockade, his excellency instructed the Trade Ministry to continue to provide food supplies through its outlets to maintain a balance in the markets. His excellency also order an increase in the production of items needed by the citizens. He added that these items should be sold at reasonable prices.

The president stressed that citizens must be informed in advance of scheduled power outages when maintenance work needs to be carried out. He said that workers must stick to this schedule, because citizens do not want their electrical appliances to experience any failures.

The Council of Ministers was briefed on the efforts by the Interior Ministry and the Housing and Reconstruction Ministry to perform maintenance on the al-Basrah water networks and the extra capacity that will be secured by installing new networks. President Saddam Husayn emphasized that efforts to improve water pumping in accordance with sanitary standards must continue. His excellency pointed out that the al-Basrah

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water projects have special importance in light of the sacrifices by al-Basrah, the City of Cities.

The Council of Ministers debated the items on its agenda and made the appropriate decisions and recommendations.

Iraq: Embargo Described as 'Worst Kind of Terrorism'

JN1504202796 Baghdad INA in English 1325 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, April 15, INA—Imposing economic sanctions is a comprehensive genocide and a violation of international law of individual and communities rights, thus embargo could be affiliated to the terrorism and it is the most destructive kind of terrorism, an Iraqi daily said.

AL-QADISIYAH newspaper, specialised in military affairs said in an article today if the terrorist operations were made by individuals or groups and they are supported by individuals or groups, the decisions of embargo and the environmental, health and social disasters have been taken by super powers who always claim that they are defending human rights.

The daily added that it has been well known that the super powers are imposing their wishes of harming and forcing their policies and interests through international organisations such as the Security Council and the activities of the United Nations in general or through conferences of which pre-fabricated decisions are issued and imposed on the participants. The decisions are apparently issued in their names but in fact they are not in favour of their peoples.

The paper added that what is going on in the world between the two poles of terrorism and sanctions gives us an extremely strange image, as the severest sanctions are imposed due to weak accusations on the one hand and terrorism is taken care of and supported by all means.

The daily referred to the harmful sanctions under the accusation that it had attempted to establish massive destruction weapons while everybody knows that the Zionist entity had possessed and produced nuclear weapons to the extent that Tel Aviv has been demanding America to officially recognize its nuclear potentials without any hesitation of fear.

The Iraqi daily added that the world in general and the Arab nation in particular had followed up the suicidal operations carried out by Palestinian young men and the aid provided to Tel Aviv materially and technically as well as the propaganda campaigns and political activities.

Despite this, the daily added, no one mentioned that what had been done by those Palestinian young men was due to the conditions imposed by the American-Zionist alliance on the region and the injustice and sufferings imposed on the Palestinian people.

AL-QADISIYAH daily went on to saying that instead of pushing the Zionist entity towards accepting the logic of justice and decreasing the tension and the feelings among the Arabs and Muslims of injustice imposed on them, the super powers had taken a contradicting direction as if the Zionist entity was deviating so they granted it an international legitimacy with which it covers its terrorism including blowing up the Palestinian houses and punishing the Palestinian people in addition to the campaigns of arrests, deportation and cutting food and medicine supplies as well as other kinds of oppression and terrorism.

The Iraqi newspaper expressed astonishment of the continuation of the embargo against Libya whose decision was taken by the Security Council on 22 March last. The paper said that the Security Council had shown its sorrow because Libya expressed satisfaction with what happened in Israel while the Zionists are committing all kinds of crimes and nobody comment on this matter.

The daily said that the increasing number of Zionist terrorist operations in recent weeks was behind the insistence of the Palestinian resistance to continue the suicidal operations because violence will lead only to counter violence.

The Iraqi newspaper AL-QADISIYAH said that putting the embargo with terrorism is a matter recognized by senior specialists in the field of international law.

The daily stressed that the number of the Iraqi children who lost their lives due to the conditions resulted from the embargo reinforces these thoughts that the embargo is the most ferocious and the worst kind of terrorism.

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Israel: U.S. Said To Border on 'Overt Endorsement' of IDF Operation

TA1204161396 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 12 Apr 96 p 8

[Commentary by Hemi Shalev: "U.S. Support for Israeli Acts of Retaliation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Asked to comment on the Israeli Air Force operations in Lebanon yesterday, the White House spokesman opted for a cautious, moderate line, which resulted in the reporters' receiving a routine, neutral U.S. reaction calling on "all sides to act with restraint."

Several hours later, the poor spokesman got his wrists slapped by his superiors: Rather than being "neutral" in the confrontation between Israel and Hizballah, the United States stands unquestionably at Israel's side.

The good Jerusalem-Washington relations on one hand and the Iranian support for Hizballah on the other guarantee a certain U.S. understanding of Israeli retaliatory operations under any circumstances. Now this understanding is becoming almost overt endorsement. There are three reasons for that: First, the credit acquired by Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by forcing restraint on the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] after the previous incidents. Second, the failure of the U.S. attempts to secure calm on the northern border through Damascus-centered diplomatic arrangements. Third, the suspicion of senior administration officials that the Syrians have again led them by the nose with a bag of full of pretexts of which none has passed the test of reality.

Peres announced last night that he is not interested in new understandings with Hizballah, but it is obvious that at some point he will seek to use his credit in Washington to involve the Americans in securing a new arrangement that will replace the collapsing ones achieved following Operation Accountability. Israeli officials have already implied as much in contacts with the administration.

The problem is that if new understandings are achieved, they will have to be the outcome of a new military situation on the ground, and yesterday's IDF operations — their high quality notwithstanding — do not fall within this definition. Thus, Hizballah holds the key to the progress of the campaign in both the military and the political sense: It can, should it so desire, react forcefully to the IDF operation, provoking a sharp counter-retaliation and setting the scene for U.S. intervention, or it can act with restraint this time, thereby obviating any significant political moves.

Furthermore, we must not forget that the credit the United States has extended to Israel is not unlimited and depends on the nature of the television footage the world broadcasts in the coming days. We should remember that the Americans supported Operation Accountability at its outset, until video footage of slain children and tens of thousands of terrified refugees fleeing their homes began flickering on television sets. The accuracy of the Air Force planes' bombs and of the helicopters' rockets will determine to a large extent the length of the period of grace that will be granted to Israel's operations in Lebanon.

And a word on politics: The restraint that extended Peres' credit with the Americans is the same restraint that reduced it with the Israelis. Thanks to yesterday's IDF operations, Peres will recover broad public support and regain his edge in the polls — in the short term, at least. Nevertheless, the elections are almost two months away and, to retain this benefit, Peres has to bring the operation he launched yesterday to a successful and relatively speedy conclusion; otherwise, he will fall victim to the old cliche heard during every military operation: Everyone knows how it starts, but no one has any idea how it will end. Particularly during an election season.

Israel: U.S. Said Working on 'New Understandings' in Lebanon

TA1304172996 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 13 Apr 96

[Report by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen]

[FBIS Translated Text] A discussion of new understandings is our political headline today. It all began this evening. As usual, the Americans are the ones trying to forge a link between Washington, Jerusalem, Damascus, and Beirut. Preliminary talks have been held. The Americans are in no rush for the time being. Acting without frenzy or hysteria, they are trying to secure a deal. The relative quiet that prevailed today is facilitating the Americans' work, the idea being to reach new understandings that will be totally different from those achieved in the wake of Operation Accountability. Israel is demanding that the understandings include a cardinal clause prohibiting Hizballah from firing katyushas at Israel's northern towns.

Israel: Russia Sees 'Exaggerated Reaction' in Lebanon Operation

TA1404153796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Russia has criticized the operation in Lebanon. In a message sent to Jerusalem, the Russians say that the Israeli operation is an exaggerated

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reaction that has caused casualties among the civilian population and the Syrian Army. The Russians claim that the situation in south Lebanon should be resolved through the UN resolution calling for the return of the Israeli forces to the international border.

Our correspondent notes that Israeli political sources have criticized the Russian message.

Israel: Beilin Comments on U.S. Understanding for Operation

TA1404191096 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 14 Apr 96

[Interview with Minister Yosi Beilin, in his Tel Aviv office, by political correspondent Nisim Mish'al in the studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mish'al] Dr. Beilin, a military operation is usually aimed at achieving some sort of political goal. Today the government intentionally avoided setting a specific political goal. Why?

[Beilin] It is true that we avoided this, the reason being that we do not want to enter a trap wherein we end up prisoners of the goals we set beforehand, which failing to achieve we get stuck in the mud. This has already happened to several governments in the past, but it will not happen to this government. This operation is a military operation aimed at making Hizballah perfectly aware of the fact that any operation by them against our northern settlements will cost them dearly. If they indeed stop attacking us the operation will end. This is all. We do not have a far-reaching political goal here. Real peace and calm will be achieved when we have a comprehensive peace as a result of our negotiations with Syria and Lebanon.

[Mish'al] We have seen that the United States has given Israel almost complete support for the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] activity. The question is how long will the United States be able to show restraint with all these pictures of refugees and wounded children featuring on U.S. television screens?

[Beilin] These pictures are extremely difficult, and to us even more than to the Americans and the Europeans. It is worthwhile to recall, however, that we did not operate immediately or rashly. Following several attacks against us we tried to see whether it was possible, with American help, to avoid a violent development in the region. The United States tried to act, but when it failed it naturally understood that we were justified in acting. I assume that at the present time we certainly have an American understanding for continuing this operation until Hizballah lays down its weapons. This will bring the operation to an end, as far as we are concerned. As will be recalled, the Americans were also deeply involved in attaining the understandings in the wake of Operation Accountability, and now they see how these understandings have been violated time and again.

Israel: UK's Portillo Meets Peres, Conveys Support for Operation

TA1504073996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Britain supports Operation Grapes of Wrath. Michael Portillo, UK secretary of state for defense, met with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres this morning and gave him a letter from Prime Minister John Major. Among other things, the letter says that Britain supports the steps Israel is taking to protect its citizens. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Michael Portillo came to Israel in the framework of the defense ties between the two countries.

Israel: U.S. Said To Show Open-Mindedness in Talks on Defense Ties

TA1504090996 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 15 Apr 96 p A7

[Report by Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Israel and the United States will sign a cooperation agreement on defense against surface-to-surface missiles, expanding the existing ties in this sphere. The two countries will set up working groups that will deal with the exchange of intelligence information, technological developments, and antimissile warfare techniques.

Details of the new agreement were discussed during Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri's visit to Washington last Friday. Pentagon officials acquainted 'Ivri with their proposed drafts of the agreement, which is expected to be signed during the upcoming visit of Shim'on Peres, prime minister and defense minister, to the U.S. capital.

The antimissile defense agreement will include the existing agreement for the continued development of an Israeli antimissile defense system, which centers around the Arrow missile. The development agreement stipulates that the two countries will allocate $500 million for the project over the next five years. Israel will invest 60 percent of the costs.

Israeli sources said that the antimissile defense agreement, the first of its kind, will mold Israeli-U.S. cooperation and create a broader political and operational framework for the development of the Arrow.

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Lieutenant General Malcolm O'Neill, director of the Pentagon's Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, will visit Israel next week to finalize the details of the new agreement. O'Neill will soon end his tour of duty; thus, his prearranged visit will be his farewell tour.

Another agreement to be signed during Peres' upcoming visit is one on counterterrorism cooperation, based on the same principles. The agreements will help the two countries form mechanisms for a joint war against the two principal security threats: terror and surface-to-surface missiles.

The agreements reflect Peres' and U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry's concept on the need for collective defense and international cooperation against cross-border threats, such as missiles and terror.

In his talks in the United States, 'Ivri brought up the need to find financing for the next stages of the development of the Nautilus laser system for intercepting katyushas and low-flying aircraft. Israeli sources said that after katyushas were launched at the Galilee, the Americans showed open-mindedness about continuing to finance the project. [passage omitted]

'Ivri's talks also addressed the Israeli requests for the inclusion of the Israeli Shavit missile in U.S. military satellite launcher tenders and for preventing the sale of espionage satellites and high-quality satellite photographs to Arab countries.

Israel: Fifth Katyusha Barrage Lands in Galilee; No One Hurt

TA1504131296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Another barrage of katyusha rockets, the fifth today, landed a short time ago in the Galilee Panhandle. Our correspondent Gay Qotev reports that the rockets exploded in an open field. Nobody was hurt and there was no damage.

Israel: Peres, Chief of Staff Hold News Conference

TA1504151696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1430 GMT 15 Apr 96

[News conference by Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq in northern Israel; broadcast in progress — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Peres] ...the infantry and ground troops who man the Lebanese front the year round are conducting the affair with a great deal of patience and determination. We called on the pilots yesterday and we visited the artillery gunners today. Nobody is impatient; we did not hear even one complaint. I think there are real results in the field.

Today is the fifth day of fighting. We have sustained hardly any casualties, and we have been trying very hard not to inflict casualties on the other side. We do not want to hurt any civilian, woman, or child. This is a no-choice operation; we were really left with no choice. We will pursue this operation until we can ensure the residents of the north that they can return to a normal life. We are not looking for victories for their own sake; we are looking for real security on both sides of the border.

Katyushas continue to fall. Their effect has been much more limited, although every Katyusha is a Katyusha and should not be dismissed. Until the fire stops, our operation will not stop either.

There have been initial moves by various countries, particularly the United States, to look for a solution that will restore the peace. I would like to say that I greatly appreciate the U.S. position, as well as that of Britain, as was reflected in Prime Minister Major's statement and the remarks today by the visiting British defense secretary. Tonight we will hear the French foreign minister; the Jordanian prime minister is due here tomorrow.

I would like to reiterate that our goal is not occupation and we have no ambition to demonstrate our power, but we have a duty as a democratic country to defend our citizens, which is what we are doing in an orderly manner.

Fortunately, we have an army that can perform this mission in the best way possible. I said as much in the cabinet session yesterday, and I can only repeat it today. To the chief of staff, the force commanders, the Air Force chief, the commander of the Northern Command, commanders of divisions and brigades, and soldiers: It is really good to see them in the field; to see their poise, seriousness, and responsibility as an army with a high combat capability and — I am not ashamed to say it — with a deep human sense. I did not encounter any thirst for blood or jingoistic attitude; I found the necessary determination to restore peace to the Galilee.

I would also like to point out that growing understanding has been emerging between the settlements on the frontline — their leaders, women, children, and men — the army which spends every day with them, and the government. The government believes it is its duty to supply the urgent needs of the settlements. A group of ministers headed by the finance minister was here yesterday. Today we have here the agriculture minister, the deputy education minister, and myself. We will try very hard to keep in daily direct contact with the settlements and their needs. I know there are problems

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with tourism and agriculture. Not everything can be solved at once, but we will try to provide fair solutions.

[TV Channel 1's Gil Tamari] Mr. Prime Minister, when will Israel decide to open the diplomatic door and try to launch a dialogue in addition to the military moves?

[Peres] Israel has always maintained an open political door. The fact is that in recent years we reached agreements with Jordan, the Palestinians....

[Tamari, interrupting] I meant a dialogue with Hizballah aimed at reaching some kind of understandings.

[Peres] I don't think Hizballah is looking for a political door. Hizballah is looking for destruction; it thinks this is sacred, but it is actually crazy.

[Tamari] Can you estimate how long Israel and the residents of the north will be able to sustain the harassment of the Katyushas?

[Peres] They will be able to sustain it for as long as necessary. I hope it will not be long.

[Unidentified correspondent] If so, Sir, what will be the next phase of the operation? What do you see about stopping the firing of Katyushas? Another salvo fell about 10 minutes ago.

[Peres] Katyushas will not stop falling until the other side realizes that we are serious in our policy, and this seriousness will be demonstrated every day.

[Correspondent] Has Syria been approached?

[Peres] We did not and will not approach anybody, seeing that although our entreaties in the past evinced a response, this response did not last long. In contrast, if approaches are made to us we will definitely respond and consider them.

[Correspondent] [words indistinct]

[Peres, in English] Well, we feel that [words indistinct] to go farther than we went until now.

[Correspondent, in English] Mr. Peres, you said that the United States is now trying to support certain [words indistinct]. What is it that the United States could do?

[Peres, in English] First of all, the United States declared clearly that the one that had violated the agreement that has existed was Hizballah. I think the United States, rightly, would like to achieve an agreement with [words indistinct].

[Correspondent, in English] What kind of agreement would that be, other than the agreement that you achieved in Operation Accountability?

[Peres, in English] We are not looking for an agreement per se. We are looking for security [words indistinct]; everything to guarantee the security of the northern part of Israel [words indistinct]. It will really bring back the security.

[Correspondent] [words indistinct]

[Peres] I didn't say they have been lessening; I said their effect has been lessening, not their number.

[Correspondent] Their number has been increasing.

[Peres] Depending on what your terms of reference are. Actually, what difference does it make?

[Correspondent] Compared to the first day.

[Peres] There have been days when there have been more Katyusha attacks than on the first day, that is correct.

[Correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, how would you sum up the fifth day of the fighting? Have there been any new characteristics compared with previous days as far as IDF [Israel Defense Forces] activities are concerned?

[Peres] I think the fifth day, just like the previous four days, is proceeding according to the predetermined plan. We follow a planned and orderly outline, and in the evening we sum up what has been done that day. There have been no deviations from the plan. Once again, today we took great care about human lives. We distinguished between the villages and Hizballah and we reacted to every attempt to damage our infrastructure. We think the operation is advancing according to plan.

[Correspondent] [words indistinct]

[Peres, in English] It is through the diplomatic channels [words indistinct].

[Tamari] I would like to address a question to the chief of staff. Sir, other than the IDF's harassment and raids on Hizballah's bastions, has its infrastructure in Lebanon really been hit?

[Shahaq] One must understand what Hizballah's infrastructure means. Hizballah is not an army with organized bases. For example, the first day we hit some logistic installation where it kept equipment. Quite naturally, being a guerrilla organization it is relatively thinly spread in a large number of places. So far, many of these places have been hit. I think infrastructure is not what characterizes Hizballah, since a Katyusha depot can be here one day and move elsewhere tomorrow; it can be in the basement of a building one day, and at another time it can be in a cave or in some warehouse in a field. Therefore, fighting Hizballah is not a matter of infrastructure. Our objective is not to score a large hit on Hizballah's infrastructure, seeing that by definition

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guerrilla organizations are not based on heavy infrastructure.

[Correspondent, in English] General Shahaq, what did your officers today present [words indistinct]. He said: I hope in two or three days we'll finish this. Is it possible that you could finish this operation in two or three days?

[Shahaq, in English] We have so many officers with so many ideas, and we have pluralism in the army. So, everyone has [words indistinct].

[Correspondent, in English] Gen. Shahaq, could you give us any figures on [words indistinct]?

[Shahaq, in English] I don't remember the exact numbers. I can tell you that I think that around 100 Katyushas at least have been fired so far. Most of our artillery is used in open areas to prevent Katyushas from being launched [words indistinct].

Israel: 3 Suffer From Shock as More Katyushas Hit Galilee

TA1504151896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Another katyusha volley landed on a western Galilee village. Three people suffering from shock were evacuated to the hospital. This is reported by our correspondent Dani Zaqen. Another barrage of katyushas also landed on the Galilee Panhandle. There are no casualties or damage.

Israel: Peres Ready To Consider 'Serious' Proposals To End Fighting

TA1504153996 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, on the fifth day of operation Grapes of Wrath, it has been learned that the United States has launched diplomatic mediation efforts in an attempt to achieve a cease-fire in Lebanon.

Washington supports Israel's demand that the first condition for any cessation of hostilities is for Hizballah to stop firing katyusha rockets. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports on the diplomatic contacts to halt operation Grapes of Wrath.

[Begin recording] [Segal] The political efforts to bring operation Grapes of Wrath to a close have begun. Since this afternoon, contacts between Washington and Jerusalem have entered high gear. The United States is now in the picture, no longer just receiving updates from Israel on developments in the north, but playing the role of an active and leading factor in stopping the fighting. An official statement to this effect came from a White House spokesman several hours ago. The spokesman disclosed that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher had spoken on the phone with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. Christopher called Damascus from the U.S. Air Force base in Alaska while President Clinton's plane was being refueled on its way to the Far East. The White House revealed that Christopher also spoke with the Lebanese prime minister and the Israeli foreign minister.

Prime Minister Shim'on Peres clarified today that although there was no Israeli political initiative to stop the military operation, Jerusalem was prepared to listen to any proposals. This is exactly what the United States is doing.

[Peres] There is some interest, true. We will examine the various proposals. If they are serious, why not? I do not know of any pressure. Those who cannot stop the katyushas cannot exert pressure to stop our pressure aimed at halting the katyusha attacks.

[Segal] When Peres was asked about Lebanese Prime Minister al-Hariri's call to return to the 1993 understandings, he replied that it must first be asked whether al-Hariri has any control over Hizballah. The message was clear. Jerusalem is waiting to see how Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will react. Syria is in a difficult position. It is unwilling to act under what appears to be the pressure of Israeli guns. Damascus is also reluctant to forgo Hizballah's activity, a card it sought to keep up its sleeve for negotiations with Israel over the Golan Heights. On the other hand, the Syrians cannot just sit quietly while their interests are being bombed on a daily basis in Lebanon.

France is also trying to squeeze into the picture. Paris is exerting heavy pressure on Israel. French Foreign Minister Herve De Charette is arriving today on an emergency visit to Jerusalem. He will meet with Prime Minister Peres and Foreign Minister Baraq in one hour. De Charette will leave for Damascus tomorrow.

As far as Israel is concerned, the situation on the international scene is bearable. Many people credit this to Shim'on Peres and the political process. With the exception of France, and perhaps also Egypt and Russia, the international community has not criticized Israel, and some countries — for example, the United Kingdom — have even explicitly expressed support while the Israel Air Force attacks the capital of a sovereign Arab state in the Middle East. British Prime Minister John Major sent a letter of support, and the British defense minister, who is currently visiting Israel, said that contrary to the French, he did not consider Israel's attacks to be disproportionate to the Hizballah rocket fire.

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[Portillo, in English] I would not describe the Israeli reaction as disproportionate. I would like to reiterate that my view is that we look to Israel always to take measures which are measured, which are considered, and which are proportionate.

[Segal translates above remarks into Hebrew and continues] This afternoon, Uri Savir, coordinator of the political process, met with foreign ambassadors in Israel and briefed them on the operation in Lebanon. The coming hours and days, he explained, would determine whether it was possible to stop the fighting on the basis of firm agreements. If the relevant parties are interested in putting an end to Hizballah's activity, a solution is achievable. If there is no such readiness, Savir told the assembled ambassadors, then even convening the Security Council tomorrow would not help. It would merely lead to more futile talk. This constitutes more than just a call on the Syrians to join the diplomatic move. [end recording]

Israel: All Planes Return After Raid on Beirut

TA1504161096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Air Force jets raided a Hizballah headquarters in Beirut this afternoon. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman reported that all our planes returned safely to their bases. Antiaircraft fire was direct at the planes, but they hit the sources of the firing.

The IDF reiterates that any katyusha attack at northern Israel will elicit firm and tough retribution.

Also today, the Air Force raided an electricity installation east of Beirut. The IDF also continues to shell and bombard targets in villages north of the security zone.

Israel: French Foreign Minister Arrives

LD1504163196 Paris France-Info Radio in French 1600 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [French Foreign Minister] Herve de Charette has arrived in Jerusalem this evening. This is the first leg of the foreign minister's Middle East tour, against a background of continuing military operations by Israel and Hizballah. He is expected to meet his opposite number, Ehud Baraq, first, before a meeting later this evening with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres. Herve de Charette is going to try to suggest a cease-fire, but the Israelis have so far refused to address this issue. Frederic Barrere reports from Jerusalem:

[Barrere] Herve de Charette is going to try to hammer out a cease-fire, a mission that already seems quite difficult, impossible even. Shim'on Peres repeated twice today that it was too early to end the bombings, and too early to start negotiations. Israel will not make any overtures or any efforts right now toward a cease-fire. The Israeli prime minister wants to break the Hizballah in south Lebanon. In the short term, the military objective pursued by Israel over the last five days is to bring to an end rocket launches and Hizballah's attacks against northern Israel.

It seems unlikely that Herve de Charette will broker a cease-fire this evening. Moreover, within the ranks of the French delegation, there is no talk of a cease-fire any longer, but of a mission whose brief will be to ease tension.

Jerusalem, Frederic Barrere, France Info.

Israel: Netanyahu Urges U.S.-Led Political Pressure on Syria

TA1504163296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu believes Israel should now start putting pressure on Syria as part of its campaign against Hizballah. Visiting the confrontation area this morning, Netanyahu said he supports the government's policy in Lebanon. It was, he told David Eppel, a good beginning, but he expected more.

[Begin recording] [Netanyahu] I hope that the government will continue the military action until the Hizballah infrastructure in the south of Lebanon is dismantled and we can restore peace and tranquillity to the north of Israel.

[Eppel] Do you not think that the flight of refugees — some 400,000 so far — from the populated areas of southern Lebanon might not lead to a counter-effect and pressure on Israel?

[Netanyahu] First of all, I am not sure about the numbers. I think it is a far smaller number. The Lebanese and Hizballah tend to inflate it for their own purposes. I think the number is considerably smaller. As far as these refugees, this is a direct result of Hizballah's actions and Lebanon's failure to control Hizballah. I think the necessary addition is not pressure on Israel but pressure on Syria; that is, if Syria is giving Hizballah the green light to attack Israel for Syrian political purposes, and Syria should know that if persists in this policy, then it will be isolated as its sister regime Iran is isolated. So far, we have taken military action against Hizballah but we have not directed political pressures on Syria. And that is a necessary ingredient that Israel must undertake before pressure is launched against Israel itself.

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[Eppel] So what would you do specifically vis-a-vis Syria? There have of course been air attacks on units of the Hizballah in al-Biqa' valley which is under Syrian control, and four Syrian soldiers were wounded near Beirut, but what would you do specifically?

[Netanyahu] Well, I am not talking about any kind of military pressure on Syria. I think that would be extraordinarily unwise. I think what is required, however, is the application of American-led international pressure on Syria. That is the coupling of diplomatic and economic pressures of the kinds that are applied to Iran. There are sanctions or threats of sanctions if Syria continues to harbor terrorists and to give them the green light, as it is doing with Hizballah. So far, Syria has been completely immune to these kinds of pressures: cutoffs of contracts, or of commerce, or of credits, or even of air travel. Syrian airplanes land freely in the West and so on. All these things can be done and many other things can be done to make it clear to Damascus that Israel will not play by Syrian rules: that is, Syria will launch Hizballah attacks against Israel to weaken Israel's position at the bargaining table. That is not acceptable, and making it clearly unacceptable is a necessary addition to our military action in the north of Israel.

[Eppel] But is this likely? Is this even realistic in the context of the peace negotiations which have admittedly been suspended? Do you think it probable the United States and other Western powers would do such a thing?

[Netanyahu] I think it is not only probable, it is virtually certain that if Israel started an effort of this kind, it could find certainly an attentive ear in the United States. Syria does not exactly enjoy a tremendous influence over popularity in the United States. So, I see no reason why this component should not be added, and I think it is necessary for peace. I mean, we have learned that we cannot have peace and terrorism coexisting. You can see that the entire peace process in the north is stalemated, in fact is hamstrung by this onslaught of terrorism. If you want to have peace you have to put down terrorism, and if you have to put down terrorism then you should direct your activities both against the terrorists themselves and the regimes that give them cover and succor — and so far that has not happened. [end recording]

Israel: No Casualties as Seventh Katyusha Attack Hits Galilee

TA1504171296 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Here is a report just in: Another salvo of katyushas was fired a few minutes ago at the Western Galilee. They landed in open fields and did not cause any casualties. A fire broke out in a thorn field where one of the katyushas landed.

Israel: French Foreign Minister Comments on Middle East Trip

LD1504174096 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 1700 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, who was received by Jacques Chirac in Paris last night, believes continued bombings may bring the peace process to an end, and he has requested a French initiative, which he was granted right away: French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette has left for the Middle East for three days. He will visit Damascus and Beirut over the next two days to try to broker a cease-fire.

However, the first leg of his tour today is Jerusalem, where he may well preach in the desert, as Frederic Barrere [correspondent in earlier report] has just put it. As you will hear, Herve de Charette has so far been very cautious in Jerusalem:

[Begin de Charette recording] France knows how serious the situation is at the border between Lebanon and Israel. France has very strong links of friendship with Israel, and it understands and shares the concerns and security demands of the Israeli people as expressed by their government.

At the same time, France has very old links binding it to Lebanon, with whom it has shared numerous pages of its history.

For all these reasons I have come to Israel today. Tomorrow I will be in Syria and Lebanon, first of all, to obtain information at the president of the Republic's request, and also to see whether, when, and how there can be a political solution to this crisis. The sooner the better. [end recording]

Israel: Syria To Disarm Hizballah Under Political Accord

TA1504175896 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1630 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Studio talk between anchormen Ya'aqov Eylon, Micky Haimowitz, and political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Haimowitz] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres today became personally involved in political contacts designed to bring about a cessation of hostilities in Lebanon within several days. In Washington and Jerusalem today, officials drew up possible drafts of such an agreement, in which Israel will demand

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a Syrian commitment to enforce any understandings on Hizballah. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen is here with the details:

[Rosen] On the morning of the fifth day of operation Grapes of Wrath, Shim'on Peres still has a finger on the trigger — but his other hand is busy formulating the diplomatic phrasing of the understandings that will lead to a cease-fire. Last night, Air Force One took off for the Far East with President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher on board. This morning, urgent phone calls were held between the prime minister's bureau in Jerusalem and the American aircraft. Peres spoke with Christopher, with Foreign Minister Baraq and Uri Savir, coordinator of the political negotiations, at his side. Later, Savir summoned foreign ambassadors to Israel to a briefing where he informed them that the political contacts may achieve results within hours or days.

[Begin Peres recording] Exploratory contacts have begun. We did not approach anyone this time or seek to launch negotiations. There were appeals by other parties, however, and we treat these appeals with respect. [end recording]

Another focal point for these contacts is Washington, where Dennis Ross and Ambassador Rabinovich are preparing initial draft proposals, with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' at the other end of the line. Peres is presenting a tough stand in these contacts, with the backing of the U.S. mediator. According to the proposed draft, Syria will pledge to enforce the understandings on Hizballah, thus becoming the arrangement's patron and scoring positive points. The understandings will stipulate that Israel's northern settlements are out of bounds for any kind of attack, whether this be through Katyusha rockets or by other means, such as the use of hang gliders. Hizballah will no longer be permitted to operate from within civilian settlements in south Lebanon. Israel, for its part, will reiterate its readiness to withdraw from the security zone within nine months, during which the Lebanese Army demonstrates that it is in full control of the area and disarms Hizballah.

Against this background, the pressure from France — the French foreign minister is meeting Peres tonight — as well as the fact that King Husayn called today and wants to send his prime minister to Israel tomorrow, all seem like a silent and not particularly bothersome accompaniment to the real activity on the Washington-Jerusalem-Damascus axis.

[Eylon] Do these draft proposals seem relatively impressive? Do these efforts have any chance?

[Rosen] Perhaps even before that: I have just learned that the French foreign minister is going to Damascus and that he wants the Iranian foreign minister to join him in order to try to put together a deal there. This seems quite unrealistic. The real action is apparently happening in Washington. These draft proposals are definitely serious. The parties are interested in achieving more than just a cease-fire but rather something that has what I would perhaps call a much broader political umbrella, with the Syrians controlling Hizballah, and — as opposed to the understandings reached after Operation Accountability — this time, Damascus will commit itself to enforcing the understandings reached now. Thus, Syria will actually become the real ruler in Lebanon with Israel's consent.

[Eylon] In 1982, the United States exerted heavy pressure when Israel bombed Beirut. Could the same thing happen this time?

[Rosen] So far, developments do not even mildly resemble the situation in 1982. President Clinton continues to show that he is the best friend Israel has ever had in the White House. There has not been even a hint of pressure from the United States. The Americans waited until Shim'on Peres said he was ready. And indeed, as of this morning, Peres has immersed himself in the diplomatic contacts. There has been no U.S. pressure, and according to political sources, Israel has all the time it needs, and it is acting from a position of strength. Until now, Clinton has demonstrated complete consideration for Israel's positions.

[Eylon] Can you give us a date or make some assessment of how many days it will take to reach such an agreement?

[Rosen] I do not want to commit myself. Officials in the prime minister's bureau said today that toward the end of the week we will probably be able either to see the glimmering of the operation's conclusion or that of an emerging political arrangement. This will happen over the weekend or perhaps at the beginning of next week.

Israel: Deputy Chief of Staff Notes Expansion of IDF Activities

TA1504185896 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1815 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Correspondent Ayala Hason video report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Chief of Staff Matan Vilna'i said that today the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] expanded the area of its activities in Lebanon because Hizballah exacerbated the firing of katyusha rockets at the Galilee. Major General Matan Vilna'i was speaking

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at a news conference in Tel Aviv. Our correspondent Ayala Hason reports.

[Begin Vilna'i recording] The most tangible development today was the exacerbation or rather the continued exacerbation in the firing of katyusha rockets by Hizballah at northern Israel, especially toward the Qiryat Shemona sector. Up until a short while ago — and do not hold me to the exact figure — we counted over 50 katyusha landings in our territory today.

As a result, we expanded our activities against the squads firing the rockets. This was manifested in the need to expand the area of our operations and displace more civilians to avoid harming them as a result of our operations. It can be noted that in general, we hit more rocket launchers today than in recent days, and I assume that this will improve as time passes. [end recording]

Israel: Peres on Diplomatic Contacts To End Lebanon Operation

TA1504193396 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1842 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres in the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem by Dan Shilon in the Galilee studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Shilon] I would like to ask you a question about the military operation in Lebanon against Hizballah. Wouldn't it have been more appropriate to have found a way to get to the roots, which are either the Syrians or perhaps the Iranians?

[Peres] What does it mean to get to the roots? To declare war on Syria? To declare war on Iran? Incidentally, notwithstanding the criticism we may have against Syria, I distinguish between Iran and them. Iran does not only arm, train, and pressure Hizballah and Islamic Jihad to operate against us, but it publicly calls for Israel's destruction and wants to break the peace process. I may criticize the Syrians, but at the same time I cannot deny that they are prepared to negotiate with Israel. Through those very negotiations the Syrians actually recognize our existence and realize that they have no choice other than to negotiate with us. It is so easy to make enemies and to perpetuate hatred, but it is so hard to undo hatred and get rid of enemies. Still, it is my trade to undo hatred rather than deepen it.

[Shilon] We heard talk today — you said it yourself — about some contacts with U.S. mediation or assistance. Can we say today that if these contacts succeed, a moment will come when we will forgo the security zone and return to the international border?

[Peres] I don't think so. I think the fate of the security zone will be determined in negotiations on a permanent peace between us and the Syrians. In fact, in our relations with Syria and Lebanon it is the Syrians who really call the shots. There are, however, two differences: This time, we tried to conduct political negotiations before we launched the operation. I approached the Americans and told them: Why should they shoot at us and we shoot at them, escalate the situation, and ultimately enter negotiations? Let us start with the negotiations. The Americans agreed, the Syrians agreed, Hizballah ostensibly agreed but did not honor its word.

Once the military operation got under way we did not ask for any political arrangement, but it is my duty to report the situation as it is. Political proposals are being made to us. We are not bloodthirsty; it does not cause us any happiness to see Lebanese being expelled from their villages. We do not want refugees, suffering, or killings, but we will definitely not agree that all the killings and suffering occur south of the Lebanese border. We are actually striving to ensure security and peace to Israel's citizens, particularly in the northern part of the country, who have suffered so much.

I must tell you that it is an experience to tour the settlements, see the children, women, and men and hear them say: All right, we are going through a rough time, but do not stop, do whatever is necessary; we have patience, and we are prepared to withstand the hardships and difficulties; do whatever is necessary for the country's security. I feel that Israel is at its best and behaves extraordinarily under duress; it is united, open, and very serious; it has wonderful soldiers and very good civilians. [passage omitted]

Israel: Peres—'No Time Limit' on Lebanon Operation

TA1504194396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said that there is no time limit on the operation in Lebanon, there is only a limit on its goals. He noted that the operation will end only after quiet prevails in the north. We intend to attain a long-term agreement that will restore peace to our northern settlements, the prime minister stated in a meeting with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette.

Mr. Peres briefed the guest on the events leading to the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] operation, and noted that Israel conducted itself with restraint until deciding to take action. He emphasized that Israel has no intention to hurt civilians but only to hit Hizballah men who use the villages as launching bases for their attacks.

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Israel: Air Force Chief Calls Off Scheduled Visit to Turkey

TA1504194696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Air Force chief Herzl Budinger will not depart on his scheduled visit to Turkey due to the ongoing operation in Lebanon, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman announced. Major General Budinger was scheduled to visit Turkey to observe the implementation of the military agreement between the two countries. Turkish Army sources noted that eight Israeli F-16's and their teams had already arrived at the Turkish Air Force base near Ankara and begun training.

Israel: Baraq Interviewed on Lebanon Operation

TA1504204196 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1905 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Studio interview with Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq by moderator Dan Margalit and panel members Amnon Dankner, Yosef Lapid, and Sheli Yehimovich; from the weekly "Popolitika" program — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Margalit] Foreign Minister Baraq, can we assume that the understandings reached at the end of Operation Accountability were basically wrong even if Hizballah did keep them? If not, then why should Israel not settle now for the understandings achieved in 1993 on the condition that we receive guarantees that Hizballah will not violate them?

[Baraq] The 1993 understandings were very good. They guaranteed over two years during which the observance of certain modus operandi gave us quiet along Israel's northern border. If someone were to come now and promise that operation Grapes of Wrath would assure us such a situation for a period of over two years, I would think it was very good. If things are quiet in the north until after the state's 50th anniversary of independence, or if every child who today is...

[Dankner, interrupting] Is it such a good situation when Hizballah enjoys the freedom to operate in south Lebanon and kill IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops? Many soldiers have been killed.

[Baraq] The reality in Lebanon is very complicated. As a result of the understandings, the situation in northern Israel was good for two years. This state of affairs was disrupted when Hizballah began to deviate systematically from the understandings, and this eventually led us to launch operation Grapes of Wrath.

[Lapid] Do you not have any moral problem with an agreement that permits Hizballah to fire katyusha rockets at the homes of south Lebanese residents who are under our protection but prohibits Hizballah from firing the same rockets across the Israeli border? Does our agreement with Hizballah not forsake our allies in south Lebanon?

[Baraq] We have no agreement with Hizballah and such a provision does not appear anywhere. On the contrary, one of the characteristics of the verbal understandings at the time was that they dealt exclusively with what was prohibited. They did not permit anything. They dealt with what was deemed unacceptable by both sides. These understandings held for two years. There is no point in returning to them because they collapsed over the past few months, leading to another Israeli military operation.

We must once again attain a situation that will be firmly enforced by either the Lebanese Government, Hizballah, or as a result of our renewed deterrence following this very successful operation, whereby no katyusha rockets will be fired at northern Israel. We will shoot back at the sources of fire, even inside villages, unless a way is found to deal with the infrastructure in them, whether by the Lebanese authorities who are sovereign there — or, in the absence of any other alternative, we will do it. If such a situation stabilizes, I will view it as a very important accomplishment of this operation, along with others.

[Margalit] So if that is the case, why did you dismiss Minister Yosi Sarid's proposal that Israel halt the operation as soon as Hizballah stopped firing rockets?

[Baraq] No, that is really skewed thinking in the operational sense. Imagine us halting our operation after a 24-hour respite from katyusha rockets, without setting binding rules and attaining a commitment that no more katyushas are fired, and then four days later during some ceremony in Qiryat Shemona 60 katyushas come crashing down. That could be a very serious development. Only a situation in which not only has the katyusha shelling stopped — after all, we elicited the katyushas by starting the operation but we were willing to risk katyushas falling on Qiryat Shemona for a week or 10 days in order to forge a new modus operandi that would be stable for a long time. On no account should we follow the recommendations made by Ministers Sarid and Tzaban, because they could really make us look ridiculous and cause great damage to our cause.

[Yehimovich] Another proposal was raised today by Ari'el Sharon: to expand the security zone all the way to the al-Litani River, and to screen the refugees who fled and not to permit those considered collaborators with Hizballah to return to the security zone. I have two questions on this issue: What do you think about the proposals themselves? What goes through your mind

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when Sharon, a graduate of the 1982 Lebanon war, makes such proposals?

[Baraq] I think the Israeli people are mature, experienced, and sober enough in everything pertaining to Lebanon. They know the authors of such proposals and have seen the results they brought. They can pass their own judgment and do not need my opinion. In my view, all those proposals are unnecessary since they will not bring more peace and quiet but fiercer violence for a longer period of time and will ultimately exact more victims, whereas our ultimate goal is to reduce the number of victims.

I think that the current evolution of the operation exposes the emptiness of the complaints sounded for weeks before the operation started: Why isn't there an operation already? Why aren't we responding? The point is that we do not set out on such operations every two weeks or every two months, since it calls for a great deal of responsibility and consideration. Any use of force entails risks, both to human lives and in political terms. It is very important that the Israeli Government had enough poise and self-control to restrain itself until the moment it became clear to everybody in the world that when we take action it is because we have no other choice. Had we not done so, we wouldn't enjoy the international support we enjoy today, we wouldn't have been able to put off the meeting of the UN Security Council, and we wouldn't have seen such a U.S. stance, which is critical to the nature and stability of the arrangements to be attained in the wake of this operation.

[Dankner] I would like to ask you about the Syrian issue. It transpires from media reports that the Syrians encourage and are a supply channel of Hizballah; they sit back and enjoy watching Hizballah's actions putting pressure on Israel. We are actually getting ready to enter negotiations with the Syrians; we are actually conducting negotiations with the Syrians under Hizballah's terror threats. What next?

[Baraq] I think what has been happening these days illustrate the IDF's ability, when sent on an operation, to inflict casualties on Hizballah and its infrastructure inside Beirut and in al-Biqa' even if these are protected by the Syrians. I think it is clear to the Syrians that their years-long investments in Lebanon, including the establishment of the current government and bringing about relative prosperity and the beginning of the reconstruction of Beirut, are now in jeopardy as a result of, among other things, our actions against the electricity infrastructure in Beirut. I think all these points illustrate our ability to act against the Syrians and the fact that the Syrians have something to lose.

[Dankner] Aren't you running the risk of a conflagration with the Syrians?

[Baraq] In my assessment, there is no such danger. We share an interest with the Syrians not to come to a conflagration. Incidentally, both sides share an interest ultimately to find a way to resume the peace talks.

[Lapid] You are in a position no other foreign minister has ever enjoyed. We have been attacking Lebanon for almost a week, and almost the entire world supports us, including the Americans. This is an excellent situation that was prepared very well. Don't you think that when we raid an ambulance and kill four girls and later the chief of staff tries to justify this by saying that the driver was a Hizballah man — as if one could tell who the driver is — don't you think that such behavior endangers our position in the world, the sympathy we enjoy, and the understanding shown for our cause? Wouldn't it have been better to give up on one Hizballah man driving an ambulance rather than raid ambulances?

[Baraq] We regret every civilian casualty. I honestly tell you that responsibility for this lies with the Lebanese Government. We don't take such actions on a whim. The chief of staff was telling the truth: those vehicles were raided based on information we had that Hizballah was using ambulances as a shield hours after we ordered the evacuation of the area. The order was to shoot at vehicles moving south driven by Hizballah men.

[Lapid] But that isn't smart.

[Baraq] What I am saying is that the chief of staff was describing real considerations in real time. Of course, we are sorry whenever innocent people are killed, particularly women and children. What I am saying is that one cannot in all honesty point an accusing finger at us after we bit our lips for such a long time at the plight of our northern citizens.

[Margalit] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and yourself spoke with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher today, which means that real negotiations have begun. I would like to ask you: What is the basis of these negotiations? What are the starting positions? What is the basic premise of the negotiations to return the situation to normal?

[Baraq] First of all, I would like to clarify the situation. We did not approach anybody in a bid to enter negotiations. It is we who were approached by various quarters. Of course, the Americans are the most interesting and important in this respect.

[Yehimovich] And the French too?

[Baraq] Yes, the French too, as well as some countries in the Middle East.

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[Margalit] Are we interested in French mediation?

[Baraq] We respect the French. France is an important country in Europe with influence in Lebanon. We would respect anybody who could persuade the Lebanese Government to cease aiming their guns at our planes and instead aim them southward, summon those guys in Beirut's southern suburb to report to the police, dismantle all the roadblocks, and disband Hizballah in the south.

[Margalit] Is it true, however, that we prefer the Americans over French Foreign Minister de Charette?

[Baraq] It makes more sense. There is no point in conducting eight different sets of negotiations. Common sense has it that any contacts developing over the next few days will be led by the Americans.

[Yehimovich] It is not really a secret that we are on the eve of elections. Could you tell us in all honesty to what extent the sentiment in the street, the massive pressure, and the desire to acquire the security halo that Labor lacks in general and Shim'on Peres lacks in particular were a consideration in the decision to set out on such an operation — and on its evolution, including the fact that it is being conducted in front of the cameras, including extensive interviews with pilots and all the attendant showing-off?

[Baraq] First of all, I have just said that for weeks we heard recurring demands by the Likud to launch an operation in Lebanon. It turns out that these recitations were unnecessary then, and that we launched an operation on the day and hour it was right to do so.

[Yehimovich] You are not saying that you complied with the Likud's demand.

[Baraq] No, but you cannot accuse us of taking advantage of the situation to launch an operation when for many long weeks the opposition actually....

[Yehimovich, interrupting] Not taking advantage, God forbid, but perhaps responding to the sentiment and desires of the street because we are on the eve of elections.

[Baraq] That is totally unfounded. The government must act according to its basic responsibility toward its citizens. The Galilee was in an impossible situation, whereby each time those miniature ayatollahs in south Lebanon or Beirut felt like firing a katyusha on the Galilee they found an excuse pertaining to some ordinary Israeli operation in south Lebanon, then fired katyushas on the Galilee. This situation was unacceptable and the IDF received the order at the right time, and it is a pity that this happened before the elections. If there is any relation to the elections, it has to do with the exact opposite; with the fact that the terror organizations stepped up their attacks on all levels — by the way, through Iranian orders — with the intention of sabotaging the peace process at this time. Unfortunately, this is happening on the eve of elections, but we will strike at them at all times: before and after the elections, slightly before and slightly after the elections.

[Margalit] I don't know if you saw the pictures shown yesterday and today of rows of Hizballah lunatics [at a suicide initiation ceremony]. What does this mean for Israel in terms of terror threats?

[Baraq] This means that we are continuing the struggle begun by the father of Uri Horowitz [in the 1948 Independence War] which our youngsters continue today. In this region you must be able to struggle. Those who do not struggle will not survive, and we intend to go on struggling.

[Margalit] So what will Christopher do tomorrow morning?

[Baraq] Tomorrow morning he will be eating sushi in Japan, but he remains in telephone contact with his men in Washington and with us. He will continue to look for ways to see if a set of understandings can be attained that will end the katyusha attacks, not just for one night but forever.

[Margalit] Please give us one optimistic sign in the Syrian position, as Christopher heard it.

[Baraq] I don't think I should relay to you optimistic signs from the Syrians. The very fact of the IDF operation, the ceaseless raids by our helicopters gradually increase the pressure on al-Hariri. And the moment it transpires that with each passing day al-Hariri has something more to lose from the continuation of our operation and that he actually has no way to stop it, sooner or later there will be willingness....

[Lapid, interrupting] Which proposal will you accept? That peace reign in the land for 40 years?

[Baraq] We have no illusions and we know that the land will not be peaceful for 40 years. We have no intention of getting back to the Sannin Mount and peace will not reign in the land for 40 years. We are striving for long-term peace and for a normal life in the Galilee, and we will reach it.

[Dankner] Do you also mean peace and quiet for the IDF and SLA [South Lebanese Army] soldiers, or will south Lebanon continue to be a fire zone?

[Baraq] There is no total quiet. The security zone will not disappear and Hizballah will not evaporate even when this operation is over.

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[Dankner] Are you thinking at all about an arrangement that would include guarantees of such peace in exchange for an Israeli withdrawal from the security zone to the international border?

[Baraq] I didn't finish answering Tommy's question. Obviously I cannot spell out on television the nuances of what will be acceptable to us. If a reasonable and logical proposal is made to us — namely, no katyusha attacks on the Galilee, license for the IDF and SLA to retaliate at sources of fire and conduct reasonable operations beyond the security zone — we will go for it. The IDF has been fighting for years and will continue to fight to ensure security to the north.

As for your question, we do not have a magic formula whereby everything will evaporate tomorrow. We indeed intend to go on with the struggle.

[Yehimovich] You are Peres' personal campaign manager. Have you been dealing with this issue these days?

[Baraq] No, and I don't believe it is necessary. The moment a government goes through such tests it makes the entire public rally around. In my opinion, there is no room for disagreements here. It is no coincidence that all political arguments and recitations calmed down for a few days. I suppose that the moment the hold-fire is given, the disagreements will resume.

[Margalit] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq, thank you very much.

Israel: Envoy to France Explains Lebanon Situation

LD1504210696 Paris Europe No. 1 Radio in French 0545 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Interview with Israeli Ambassador to France Avi Pazner by Olivier de Rincquesen in the Paris studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Rincquesen] Good morning, Avi Pazner.

[Pazner] Good morning.

[Rincquesen] How long will Israel continue with its shelling of the Lebanon?

[Pazner] Until we have achieved our objective, which is to destroy Hizballah's military capacity. In other words, to bring about a situation in which Hizballah will no longer be able to sow terror in the north of our country, to cause casualties among innocent members of the Israeli population, and to block the peace process.

[Rincquesen] Apparently the effect achieved is the opposite of that sought because the shelling is as heavy as ever.

[Pazner] We have not yet finished our military operation and when we began it we said that it would be an operation which would not be a very short one, because there are many of them, they are dispersed...

[Rincquesen, interrupting] How many of them do you believe there are?

[Pazner] Between 1,000 or 1,500 and 3,000. It is very difficult to know precisely and behind them there is a bigger political organization, but those described as terrorists must number somewhere in the region of the figures which I have mentioned to you.

[Rincquesen] You are not managing to hit them in spite of the stepping up of raids using helicopters and by sea.

[Pazner] Yes, we are succeeding in hitting them, many of them have already been hit, and even if they continue to fire their rockets at Galilee they are becoming less and less precise and we will continue with this battle against them. We will hunt them out throughout the Lebanon, not just them, but also their staff commands, their radio stations, and everything they use, because it has been clearly proven now, with Hizballah, that there is no chance of reaching an agreement, there is no chance of reaching any understanding. We had a tacit agreement with them in 1993 which they violated and they continued with their acts of aggression against us and we now have no other alternative, after having tried everything.

[Rincquesen] Why should you succeed this time when in 1993 Operation Accountability did not achieve the desired result?

[Pazner] Because it was halted too early and I believe that that was a mistake which we will not make this time and we intend to see this thing out, until we bring about a situation in wnich Hizballah no longer exists as a military threat.

[Rincquesen] Does that mean that this may include a land-based operation?

[Pazner] I do not believe so. I would not want to rule it out but I do not believe that it includes a land-based operation. I believe the operation which we are carrying out at the moment is extremely effective and we would like to bring about a situation in which the Lebanese Government realizes that its support for Hizballah is costing it too high a price and does with Hizballah what it did with the other militias after 1989, in other words disarms Hizballah — as the Maronite Phalangist militias were disarmed, as the Druze and the Sunnis were disarmed, Hizballah must now be disarmed.

[Rincquesen] Did you hear [Lebanese Prime Minister] Mr. al-Hariri, who was saying a short while ago that

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it is for Israel first to withdraw its troops if Lebanon, assisted by France, assisted by the United Nations, is to be able to guarantee security in southern Lebanon?

[Pazner] Look, this question which is being put is back to front in terms of reality. If we see that we are no longer being threatened from southern Lebanon then we have no problem with withdrawing. As you know, we have no territorial claim, no political or other design on Lebanon. We would like to consider it as a friendly country. Our problem is that Hizballah has established itself in southern Lebanon. It makes life miserable for us and we must silence it now. After that we can start talking about withdrawal.

[Rincquesen] Does Mr. al-Hariri seem to you a credible negotiator?

[Pazner] Why not? However, has Mr. al-Hariri demonstrated up to now that he is prepared to take the bull by the horns and try to control this murderous terrorist organization? He has still not done it but perhaps now, with the present situation, perhaps now he will wake up. It is not too late. It is still possible now to do what should have been done five or six years ago.

[Rincquesen] You want to say that the Syrians could silence the guns of Hizballah?

[Pazner] The Syrians also have a big influence. It has been shown in the past that when the Syrians really wanted it, the Hizballah kept quiet. There is no reason why Syria, which is one of the major backers of Hizballah, should not get involved — without Syria, Hizballah could not operate.

[Rincquesen] Will the Americans put pressure on the Syrians this time as was the case with the agreement in 1993?

[Pazner] It is possible. We have not reached that stage, I tell you. I am reading the situation on the ground as we are still right in the middle of the military operation. The military operation has not ended, as you see, since you said yourself that it is continuing. The rocket fire is continuing. The military operation has still not come to an end. We will see once the military operation has ended who will take the political initiative to bring about a cease-fire.

[Rincquesen] However, deep down, do you admit that there is no solution through force or do you really think that the solution lies through the use of arms?

[Pazner] Well, it has been shown now over months and months that our government has gone right to the end of its tether and has called on everybody, including France and the United States, to try to calm down the situation in Lebanon. It was already becoming pathetic. They were firing rockets. We were imploring everybody to silence them. Nobody succeeded. It [the firing of rockets against Israel] continued. We had no option. It is now necessary to take up arms and try to settle this problem in this way.

[Rincquesen] Mr. al-Hariri says that one must not be stubborn and hard-headed?

[Pazner] Yes, we are known as the people who hold our heads high. When we decide something, when we decide to undertake a military operation, we want to undertake it properly and not do only half the job or a quarter of the job. This operation needs to be well managed and then I think that the hour of diplomacy will come.

[Rincquesen] You saw [French Foreign Minister] Mr. de Charette yesterday evening [14 April], who today leaves for Israel and then without doubt will travel on to Damascus and to Lebanon. What can France bring to this situation?

[Pazner] Well, it can help and what Mr. de Charette is trying to achieve is very praiseworthy. It was President Chirac who personally asked him to make an immediate visit to the Middle East. I met him yesterday to facilitate his visit to Israel. France is Israel's ally and if France wants to help, we want to see what France can contribute.

[Rincquesen] can you briefly say if this offensive has anything to do with the elections in a few weeks time?

[Pazner] Absolutely nothing. Absolutely nothing. The date for these events was decided by the Hizballah who began to bomb the northern part of our country and who left us with no option but to use force.

[Rincquesen] Is "Operation Grapes of Wrath" not a little early for the grape-harvesting season?

[Pazner] It is grape-picking in spring.

[Rincquesen] Thank you, Avi Pazner, for having been our guest on Europe 1 this morning.

Israel: Sources Say Residents of Sidon May Be Ordered Out of Area

TA1604043696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is expected to extend the scope of its operations in Lebanon in response to yesterday's continued firing of katyusha rockets. Qol Yisra'el's military reporter Karmela Menashe, quoting military sources, says that Israel is considering ordering residents of Sidon and surrounding areas to leave their homes.

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It was a quiet night on the northern border. No rocket attacks were reported. [passage omitted]

Israel: De Charette Calls Velayati, Vows To Coordinate With U.S.

TA1604050496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Last night, French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette met with Prime Minister Peres, and today he will hold talks in Lebanon and Syria. An Iranian delegation is also due in Damascus, reportedly to be led by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati. David Ze'ev reports:

[Begin recording] [Ze'ev] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette says the solution to the current crisis can only be diplomatic, not military. France and the EU have spoken out in favor of maintaining ties with Iran against American and Israeli wishes, and the French are now using those relations. Hizballah is said to be receiving wide support from Tehran. The French foreign minister says that in his phone call yesterday with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, he insisted that Iran use its influence to find a solution as quickly as possible. The French foreign minister said his country will coordinate its steps with the Americans and their secretary of state. De Charette spoke to reporters in Jerusalem last night.

[De Charette] At the moment, it is too early to imagine what can be possible to make the crisis to an end. But be sure that with the American Government and especially with Warren Christopher, I will be in close contact to find all together the best solution to the crisis. I would like to insist on the urgency to find a rapid solution.

[Ze'ev] The Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem says Shim'on Peres told de Charette that Israel intends to reach a long-term agreement — in other words, not a temporary stop to the Hizballah attacks on northern Israel. Peres told the French foreign minister that Israel has shown restraint until now, but he said the current operation will last for as long as it takes for Israel to reach its targets. [end recording]

Israel: Indyk Reportedly Aiming To Bring Operation 'to a Close'

TA1604062696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Ambassador Martin Indyk is handling the contacts on political negotiations with the aim of bringing Operation Grapes of Wrath to a close. Yesterday, Amb. Indyk spent hours at the prime minister's bureau.

Political sources told our political correspondent Shlomo Raz that the right conditions for starting a political dialogue will be created toward the end of the week. The sources noted that the intention is to initiate a comprehensive move that will guarantee better understandings than those reached following Operation Accountability as well as the resumption of negotiations between Syria and Israel.

Israel: Katyushas Hit Galilee Panhandle; No Casualties or Damage

TA1604081796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent Ilan Ro'e reports that a volley of katyusha rockets landed in the Galilee Panhandle approximately 15 minutes ago. There were no casualties and no damage has been reported.

Israel: Katyushas Hit Western Galilee; Conflicting Casualty Reports

TA1604084296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0830 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Katyusha rockets landed in an inhabited area in the Western Galilee several minutes ago. Several people were wounded, and they are now on the way to the hospital. Earlier today — approximately 45 minutes ago — katyusha rockets were fired at the Galilee Panhandle. There were no casualties or damage.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0835 GMT notes that ambulance staff who arrived at the scene of the latest katyusha rocket landings reported that "there were no casualties" and that "the initial reports of casualties were erroneous."]

Israel: Sources Say Operation Part of Peres' Overall Peace Strategy

TA1604090196 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 16 Apr 96 pp A1, A2

[Report by Aluf Ben, 'Aqiva Eldar, and Gay Bekhor]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Political sources disclosed yesterday that Operation Grapes of Wrath is part of a comprehensive political and military operation initiated by Prime Minister Shim'on Peres in an attempt to restore calm to northern Israel and bring Syria back into the negotiating process — this, while making Damascus clearly responsible for maintaining quiet along the border.

Peres formulated his strategy during the weeks preceding the operation, in the course of attempts to ensure calm through diplomatic means. At the time, Peres and

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his close associates reached the assessment that quiet could only be restored by a large-scale military operation that would force Syria to become involved and assume responsibility for developments in Lebanon.

Syria found itself outside the political process following the wave of terrorist attacks in Israel and last month's conference in Sharm al-Shaykh. Israel suspended the talks with the Syrians and made their resumption conditional on Damascus' taking some action against terrorism. Israel did so, however, without making any explicit demands of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

Peres' associates believe that prompting Syrian involvement in restraining Hizballah will be a first step in its demonstrating that Damascus has realized that the peace process and terrorist attacks are mutually exclusive. This would open the way to the resumption of political negotiations. At the same time, however, Peres is of the opinion that the talks will only be resumed officially after the Israeli elections. Senior political officials are not all of one mind with regard to the demands that should be presented to the Syrians.

The United States backs Peres' approach that the military operation should be exploited as a lever by which to thaw the peace process. According to Israeli sources, Syria has sent messages to the United States hinting "that there is something to talk about." [passage omitted]

Israel: Katyusha Volley Injures 2, Causes Property Damage

TA1604092496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Two katyusha rocket volleys were fired in the last hour: one at the Western Galilee and the second at the Galilee Panhandle. Two sisters were very slightly injured in the Western Galilee, and damage was caused to property. There were no casualties or damage in the Galilee Panhandle.

Our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports that one katyusha rocket landed near a residential house in the Western Galilee. Two young sisters who were in the house were taken by a neighbor to hospital because one sister was struck by shrapnel and the other was in a state of shock.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0914 GMT reports that "another volley of katyusha rockets landed a few minutes ago. There are no reports of casualties so far."]

Israel: No Casualties in Katyusha Volley in Galilee

TA1604110096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1050 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Another volley of katyusha rockets has landed in the Galilee. There are no casualties, but damage was caused.

Israel: Envoy to UK on Attacks Against Hizballah

MS1604105796 London BBC 1 Television Network in English 0600 GMT 16 Apr 96

[Interview with Israeli Ambassador to London Moshe Raviv in his London residence by presenter Justin Webb in the studio; from the "Breakfast News" broadcast — live]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Webb] The Israeli ambassador to London Moshe Raviv is at his residence, he joins us now live. Mr. Raviv good morning.

[Raviv] Good morning.

[Webb] You're hitting the wrong targets aren't you in Lebanon, the more one sees the television pictures of what's going on there — you see innocent people, you see civilians in desperate straits, there are civilians dead, and yet Hizballah are apparently untouched.

[Raviv] No it is Hizballah who started the circle of violence. It is Hizballah who continue to pound our villages and towns in the Galilee and it is Hizballah who refuses to stop the fire and they continue shelling and rocketing the northern Galilee.

[Webb] But it is not Hizballah who are being punished by you. You're punishing though, I mean fair enough, even if you accept those points, that it is Hizballah who are responsible for the things that you are trying to stop, fair enough, why not attack Hizballah. You seem to be attacking so widely.

[Raviv] No. Our attacks are as pinpoint as possible. We attack Hizballah and we attack villages who gave shelter to Hizballah. This is the only thing, we are trying to avoid collateral damage, and we are trying to avoid civilian casualties. But in war it is very difficult.

[Webb] But you are forcing hundreds of thousands of people from their homes. Hundreds of thousands of people are having to leave their homes, that's not pinpoint accuracy?.

[Raviv] No, but these villages in southern Lebanon — most of them — gave shelter to Hizballah. And the government of Lebanon has done nothing in order to stop Hizballah from firing into Israel and to try and destabilize the peace process. Now the powers behind

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Hizballah know exactly what is happening, but they do not seem to care. The government of Lebanon can not shirk it's responsibility from southern Lebanon. It has an army, it can try and impose order there and disarm Hizballah in the same way in the same way as it has disarmed all the other militias.

[Webb] That would just lead to another Lebanese civil war, wouldn't it?

[Raviv] No it would not. They have done it with the others, and they can do it with Hizballah. Now Syria which is the main conduit for explosives, ammunitions support that is coming from Iran to Hizballah, can stop this, but they do not seem to care, they do not mind. Hizballah continues to pound our villages and towns, cause a lot of people to be dislocated, injuries, children for months and months have stayed in shelters, schools could not operate, and now everybody looks only at the refugees on the other side.

[Webb] You mentioned Syria. Syria who control so much of what goes on in Lebanon. The Iranians of course, fund Hizballah. Why don't you attack those two nations more directly, either physically or in speech. Why are you going after the Lebanese who really are pretty powerless in all this?

[Raviv] But we are seeking peace. We do not want any more confrontations. This confrontation has been imposed upon us. After we have shown months and months of utmost restraint. After the Americans have tried and tried again with their diplomacy, to avoid the clashes and to avoid the shelling of the Israeli townships and villages in the Galilee. All this has failed and we were compelled to take actions. Now we do not want to bind the confrontation, we actually do not have any confrontation with the government of Lebanon. We do not have any confrontation with Syria. What we would like all these people to do is to rein in Hizballah and to make sure that our villages in the Galilee will be able to live in peace. Now if there will be peace in the Galilee there will be tranquillity on the other side as well.

[Webb] Mr. Raviv we've seen these actions before from Israel, we've seen promises before that the threat from Hizballah is going to be eliminated, we see those promises again now. How long is this going to go on. Are you intending as a nation to continue this action until those threats are completely eliminated or is there some way in which the thing can be brought to an end?

[Raviv] We are prepared to stop today. But it must be made sure that the operations of Hizballah will stop. It can be made true because for many years we had a kind of [words indistinct] where it was possible to continue to live in peace on both sides of the border. I believe that we can restore it, but what we need is a commitment that will be supervised by the people who are helping Hizballah. A commitment that the operations of Hizballah will stop. If this stops, of course we shall stop our operations as well.

[Webb] Mr. Raviv thank you very much for talking to us.

Israel: Sharon Urges Extending South Lebanon Security Zone

BR1604111896 Milan CORRIERE DELLA SERA in Italian 16 Apr 96 p 5

[Report on interview with Israeli Likud Deputy Ariel Sharon by Lorenzo Cremonesi in Jerusalem; date not given: "Sharon's Revenge: I Was Right in 1982"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem — "There are two ways to resolve the crisis on the border between Lebanon and Israel — to extend the area controlled by our troops and to reach an agreement whereby the Shiite militias absolutely cannot fire a single shot. Anything else could exacerbate the situation." Ariel Sharon has not changed. More the general than the politician, a "super-hawk" par excellence, and always an advocate of tough methods in the struggle against the Arabs, in this instance too his solution is the most radical of all.

"It must be realized that on our northern border there is an outright war that has been in progress for many years. The latest events have only helped to exacerbate its most critical aspects. And now that we have succeeded in vacating the area of its Lebanese citizens, we must exploit the opportunity to dictate a new status quo."

Sharon is unrepentant. At 68, he remains the inflexible "Captain Arik" of the famous 101st Brigade of the fifties, when his job was to spread terror among the Arab rearguard; or the iron general who, against orders from headquarters, ordered his tanks to cross the Suez Canal to encircle the Egyptian Army in Sinai during the 1973 war. Above all, he does not regret having been the architect of "Peace in Galilee," the 1982 invasion that brought Israeli tanks to the heart of Beirut.

This past history remains tragically topical: the Israeli public protests in August that year against an invasion that most of the country still consider entirely futile, the international condemnation, and even the massacres in the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in Beirut and his resignation as defense minister after a very controversial committee of inquiry judged him indirectly responsible. No conclusion has yet been reached in the trial resulting from his suit against the daily, HA'ARETZ, for accusing him of concealing from then Prime Minister Begin his real intention to

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send troops as far as Beirut. Sharon spoke about it angrily: "An outright crime was committed against me. I was condemned for being unable to forecast that the Christian Arabs would commit a massacre against the Muslim Arabs while purging Sabra and Shatila of their terrorist dens. I am the victim of standards unacceptable in any democratic country."

Lebanon is his Achilles heel. Until that time he seemed destined to be the next prime minister. But since that defeat he has been confined to the status of a deputy for the ultra-nationalist Likud Party. He is obsessed by it and is constantly seeking revenge. So the parallels with the present situation are inevitable. According to Sharon, there are enormous differences between what he calls "the reign of terror imposed by the PLO in Lebanon in 1982" and the presence of the Hizballah. "At that time we were confronted by a fully armed army, whereas now there are just a few guerrillas who hide behind the civilian population." How are they to be combated? "In 1985 the short-lived Labor government of Shim'on Peres did its best to show that our military action was a failure. So after the withdrawal from Beirut it was decided to limit the extent of the 'Security Zone' (the area of Lebanese territory along the border controlled by the Israelis — CORRIERE DELLA SERA editor's note) to a mere 10 km. That was a huge mistake, because the Band must always be more than 22 km deep, this being the range of the Katyusha rockets." What is the solution? Simple: Just extend it as far as the river Litani, the limit temporarily set by Peres three days ago, beyond which any vehicle or individual will be regarded by Israeli troops as a potential enemy to be fired on.

"Above all, we must control the two bridges over the Litani. They are a most important objective. This, because we could control the return of the population to their homes in the southern areas and thus prevent Hizballah from being able to establish itself again too close to the international border." He believes that the mistake was made three years ago, because of then Prime Minister Rabin's "weakness." "At that time it was agreed that the Shiites could fire on our troops in the Security Zone in exchange for calm among the civilians in Galilee." Sharon spoke about this very contemptuously, in terms of an outright defeat. According to him, the enemy must always and under any circumstances be defeated and disarmed once and for all. "If I had been in Rabin's shoes, I would have demanded a complete end to hostilities, including attacks in Israel and abroad, such as those against our missions in Argentina."

Israel: Another Katyusha Salvo Fired at Western Galilee

TA1604121896 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1205 GMT 16 Apr 96

[Report by Baraq Ronen in the north — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest volley of katyushas fell in the Western Galilee between 1400 and 1435 [1100-1135 GMT]. Several rockets were fired, but no one was hurt. They fell far from any houses or buildings, and that is why there was no damage.

We would like to remind you that two 16-year-old girls were wounded earlier this morning in a salvo fired at the Western Galilee. They are currently being treated in the hospital.

The current salvo, however, did not cause any casualties or damage.

Israel: IDF Spokesman Confirms Air Force Raid on Beirut

TA1604131896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This afternoon Air Force helicopters again attacked a Hizballah target near the airport in Beirut. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman announced that Air Force helicopter gunships attacked a Hizballah regional headquarters in Beirut, and that the pilots reported good hits on the targets. Antiaircraft fire was directed at the helicopters during the raid, and they retaliated at the sources of the fire. All our aircraft returned safely to their base.

Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the raid came as part of the IDF activities in the wake of the katyusha attacks on northern Israel at noon today. The IDF spokesman reiterates that any firing at Israel will elicit an appropriate response. Reports from Beirut note that four Apache helicopters took part in the raid, and that two people were wounded in the firing.

Israel: Briton Named Andrew Newman Said Behind East Jerusalem Blast

TA1404154496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A Jerusalem judge has allowed the publication of information regarding the foreign citizen in whose East Jerusalem hotel room a bomb exploded last Friday [12 April], wounding the man himself. Following a Qol Yisra'el appeal, Justice Yo'el Tzur permitted the issuing of a report saying that the man holds a British passport and that his name is Andrew Newman.

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Israel: Man Dies of Wounds From 25 Feb Bombing; Fatalities Total 60

TA1404114896

[FBIS Summary] Tel Aviv DAVAR RISHON in Hebrew on 14 April carries a report by Hila Qomem and Ran Melamed on page 5, saying that "Ira Weinstein, aged 54 from Ma'ale Adumim, who was wounded on 25 February in the first bus No. 18 bombing in Jerusalem, died last night from his wounds." "Weinstein is the 26th fatality of this attack, which was the most lethal of the five terror attacks," and with his death, the number of fatalities from the terror attacks that occurred between 25 February and 4 March reached 60. The report goes on to say that 10 people who were wounded in the attacks are still hospitalized, five of them in serious condition.

Israel: 2 Palestinian Squads Reportedly Training in Iran

TA1504064796 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] These very days, two Palestinian squads belonging to extremist organizations are training in Iran. Iran intends to prepare them for terror attacks in Israel. This is part of a report that reached Jerusalem in the wake of the Shin Bet's arrest of the Islamic Jihad activist who trained in Iran. He arrived there from Turkey and was captured while trying to return to the territories.

From his interrogation, it became apparent that a personal team of instructors is working closely with the 10-member and seven-member squads. The trainers instruct them in physical fitness, light weapons, explosives, and Islamic and Iranian revolution ideology. These very days, the team in Iran is preparing them to return to the territories to carry out terror attacks inside Israel.

Uri Lubrani, coordinator of government activities in Lebanon, is on the phone. Can you confirm this?

[Lubrani] I can neither deny nor confirm this report. All I can say is that I am not at all surprised. I am not familiar with this or any other report and cannot say whether it is correct, but it is not surprising because we know that the Iranians are training people whose aim is to carry out terror attacks in Israel.

Israel: Layla Khalid Denied Entry to West Bank

TA1504051596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Layla Khalid, who gained international notoriety when she helped hijack airliners in the 1970's, was refused permission to enter the West Bank yesterday. She was due to have crossed over from Jordan, but security officials were still checking statements she made in support of terror.

Israel: Authorities To Allow PNC Members, Layla Khalid To Enter Gaza

TA1604045096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Israel is allowing members of the Palestine National Council, the PNC, to enter Gaza. Among those given permission are Democratic Front leader Nayif Hawatimah and Layla Khalid, the former hijacker.

Abu-Dawud [Muhammad Dawud 'Awdah], who masterminded the 1972 attack on Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, has already arrived in Gaza without being asked to sign a declaration that he was against terrorism. Israeli security sources said that they will not ask for such assurances in order not to give the Palestinians an excuse to delay amending the Palestinian Covenant.

The Palestinian Authority has asked Israel to allow another 60 PNC members to arrive, including Popular Front leader George Habash.

Israel: DFLP's Hawatimah Permitted To Enter Autonomous Areas

TA1504133896 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1300 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel has permitted Nayif Hawatimah, leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, to return to the autonomous areas. Hawatimah is currently in Damascus and plans to arrive via the Allenby Bridge within a few days.

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Jordan: King Discusses Lebanon Situation With Foreign Envoys

JN1504163696 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1518 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn received the ambassadors of the UN Security Council permanent member states at the Royal Hashemite Court today. Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti attended the meeting, which was part of the Jordanian efforts, led by his majesty, to end the military actions in Lebanon.

His majesty also met with the ambassadors of the European Troika member states to brief them on the Jordanian position on these events. Prime Minister al-Kabariti also attended this meeting. His majesty expressed to the ambassadors Jordan's grave concern about the tension and the military actions that have escalated in Lebanon and that have killed several people and left thousands of innocent Lebanese homeless.

His majesty emphasized the seriousness of these events, which may threaten the regional peace process, especially since they coincide with the siege imposed on the self-rule areas, which is causing great hardship to the Palestinians.

His Majesty King Husayn told the ambassadors of the permanent members of the UN Security Council and the European Troika states that he hopes their countries will act seriously and swiftly to put an end to these military actions, which threaten the peace process and might return the region to a state of tension, conflict, and instability.

His majesty also emphasized the need to pool the efforts to support the regional peace process and to adopt dialogue and negotiations as the means to settle conflicts, so that the peace process can achieve its desired goal: the comprehensive and lasting peace that is sought by the people of the region and that will allow the people to resume their march toward construction and development and build a better future for generations to come.

Jordan: Prime Minister al-Kabariti Leaves for Israel

JN1604102696 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti left Amman for Israel at noon today on a short working visit during which he will deliver a letter from His Majesty King Husayn to Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres.

Al-Kabariti received in his office this morning the chairman and members of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee. The prime minister briefed them on the efforts His Majesty King Husayn and the Government are exerting to halt the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon as a result of the Israeli aggression on it which now endangers the entire peace process.

Jordan: Al-Mu'ashshir Seeks End to Israeli 'Actions' in Lebanon

JN1604112396 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 16 Apr 96 pp 1, 7

[Report P.V. Vivekanand]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] [passage omitted] "Jordan is using its relations with Israel as well as all other influential parties, including the U.S. and European countries, to end the Israeli military actions in Lebanon and to resume the peace process," Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir told reporters at a weekly press briefing.

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir, noting that King Husayn contacted Lebanese President Elias al-Hirawi on Sunday [14 April] to express concern over the continuing crisis in Lebanon, said the Monarch was pursuing his contacts over the past two days and that "the results of the efforts will be visible in the next two days."

The minister also said Jordan was sending 10 tonnes of relief supplies to help the victims of Israeli air raids since Thursday [11 April].

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir rejected assertions that Jordan had adopted a low-profile approach to the Lebanese crisis and pointed out that Mr. al-Kabariti was the first Arab official to contact Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri to express concern over the situation in his country. The information minister also noted that Mr. al-Kabariti had also contacted his Israeli counterpart Shim'on Peres calling for an immediate end to Israeli military operations in Lebanon.

The information minister also dismissed assertions that Jordan could have favoured an immediate suspension of the peace process as a lever-age to force Israel to call off its operations in Lebanon.

"It is in nobody's interest to suspend the peace process," Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said. "On the contrary, what Jordan is seeking is an immediate resumption of the peace process" leading to the elimination of reasons for tension in the region.

The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lower House of Parliament meanwhile issued a statement after discussing Israel's "flagrant aggression against Lebanon."

The statement said the committee was closely following the "ugly crimes committed by the Israeli army in the

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sovereign land of Lebanon—the killings and shedding of blood, forcing hundreds of thousands to flee their homes, the burning of crops, the destruction of homes and infrastructure."

It criticised the international community "for keeping silent, watching this barbarianism just as it watched the Serb crimes" against Muslims in ex-Yugoslavia.

"Lebanon is an independent Arab country and the Israeli actions there shows (Israel) real image in terms of its aggressive nature and disrespect for human values," said the statement. "Where are the voices that were talking about terrorism?" it said in an implicit reference to the anti-terrorism summit held in Egypt's Sharm al-Shaykh on 13 March.

It described the Israeli assault on Lebanon as aimed at serving Mr. Peres' objective of getting reelected in the 29 May 29.

The statement called on "all free people who believe in human principles and all Arab and international parliaments, humanitarian organisations, the United Nations Security Council, the United Nations General Assembly, the Arab League, and the Organisation of Islamic Conference to adopt a firm stand against Israel's barbarianism... and to remind Israel that it is the cause of the escalation (of hostilities) in South Lebanon."

Leaders of political parties meanwhile visited the Lebanese ambassador to Jordan, William Habib, and handed him a memorandum protesting the Israeli military operations in Lebanon and addressed to president al-Hirawi. The parties have also called a sit-in protest between 10 a.m. and 12 noon on Tuesday [16 April] to express solidarity with the Lebanese people.

Jordan: House Committee Condemns Israeli 'Aggression'

JN1504163296 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Committee issued a statement today condemning the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the military attacks that target civilians.

The statement, issued by the committee after its session today, says Israel's actions are pushing the region to the boiling point. The statement calls on Arab and world parliaments, humanitarian organizations, the United Nations, the Arab League, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to take a decisive stand to stop this aggression.

Jordan: Political Parties, IAF Condemn Israeli 'Aggression'

JN1404124396 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 14 Apr 96 pp 1, 12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman (J.T.)—Jordanian political parties on Saturday [13 April] called for emergency Arab summit to discuss the "dangerous situation resulting from Israel's brutal aggression on Lebanon" and warning that the Arab masses "cannot remain silent for long in the face of the continued aggression on the Arab people of Lebanon."

The call came in a statement circulated to the media and signed by nine political parties which strongly condemned the aggression as a genocide against the Lebanese nation.

"The Zionist enemy has not satisfied itself with the repressive measures against the Arab people of Palestine and is waging a brutal aggression on the Lebanese people by land, air and sea using American weapons and backed by the United States in further show of disregard to international laws," said the statement.

It said: "The new aggression on Lebanon has caused the displacement of tens of thousands of people, devastated whole villages and parts of Beirut while the world is just looking on, while those who attended the Sharm al-Shaykh summit are not lifting a finger in defence of the victims of state-organised terrorism and aggression.

"The world's silence towards this aggression proves that the United States stands behind it and encourages the Zionists in their neo-nazi and racist practices against the Arab people."

"We call on the world community to stand firm in the face of the new Nazis and prevent them from devastating Lebanon and endangering world peace.

"Only through a united Arab front can the Arab states face this new aggression and abort the Zionist enemy's ambitions which threaten the Arab Nation's dignity and future.

The political parties which signed the statement were: The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, the Arab Progressive Ba'th Party, the National Action Front Party, the Islamic Action Front Party, the Pan-Arab Action Party, the Constitution Party, the Jordanian Democratic People's Party, the Jordanian Communist Party and the Jordanian Democratic People's Unity Party.

The Islamic Action Front (IAF) party also issued a separate statement calling on the Arab countries to convene an Arab summit meeting and take collective action to deal with the repeated Israeli acts of aggression

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on Lebanon. The IAF said: "The Israelis are launching an open aggression on the Lebanese people by land, air and sea and causing the displacement of tens of thousands of people."

"The IAF strongly condemns the Zionist attacks which constitute a plot spearheaded by the United States against the national resistance forces in Lebanon and condemns the Arab countries which are shirking their duty towards defending Lebanon and are only satisfied by just looking on while the Lebanese people face a genocide," said the statement.

The IAF statement called on Arab countries to declare a "collective stand vis-a-vis this aggression and demand its immediate end."

It also said an Arab summit [should] be convened to discuss the prevailing conditions in the Arab world and reach the minimum level of coordination among Arab states with regard to common issues.

It said the Arab League [should] "shoulder its responsibilities in the face of any aggression on Arab states."

It called on the Arab parliamentary Union to hold an emergency session to review the situation in the Arab World.

It said the Arab countries attending the international Parliamentary Union meeting in Istanbul should call on world parliaments to condemn the Israeli operation in Lebanon.

It called on Arab political groups to help stimulate Arab masses into taking action in the "face of the conspiracies directed against the Arab Nation."

"The Syrian and Lebanese armed forces should shoulder their responsibility of defending Lebanon and abort Israel's aggression," it said adding:

"The Arab governments and non-governmental organisations should organise a speedy campaign to raise in kind and financial contributions for the Lebanese people."

Jordan: Convoy of Trucks Carrying Relief Aid Leaves for Lebanon

JN1604070696 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A convoy of trucks left last night carrying a variety of relief and humanitarian aid offered by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the fraternal Lebanese people.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-'Abbadi, minister of awqaf and Islamic affairs and secretary general of the Hashemite Jordanian Charity Organization, said that this convoy was organized under directives from His Majesty King Husayn, which were followed up with interest by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti. He noted that the convoy was organized with the cooperation of the Hashemite Jordanian Charity Organization, the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Supply, the Jordanian Red Crescent, a number of official and popular figures, and donating companies from the private sector.

The convoy of 13 trucks is carrying large quantities of tents, blankets, medicine, medical supplies, and a variety of food. The organization has received and continues to receive material and cash donations from citizens to offer more aid.

Jordan: Paper Criticizes Israeli Raids, Calls For Return to Talks

JN1204122796 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 12 Apr 96 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "Perils Cloud the Sky of Peace"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an attack unprecedented in 13 years, Israeli warplanes raided the heart of the Lebanese capital as well as other areas in southern Lebanon and al-Biqa'. These attacks bring to mind the incidents that occurred in Lebanon in the 1970's and early 1980's.

No doubt, yesterday's Israeli air raids constitute a grave escalation in the military situation. They herald counter-warlike attacks that will set in motion a larger and more ruthless whirlpool of violence, further exacerbate the situation, and further expose the already unstable situation there to perils known to all.

In light of this escalation and the many possibilities it might entail, we believe that returning to the negotiations that were suspended over a month ago is the best means to check all the eventual breakdowns and contain the fire which these raids further ignite.

We also believe that attacking civilian districts in Beirut and widening the scope of Israeli retaliatory reaction to include the various Lebanese areas are not the right answer to a situation where Israel continues to occupy southern Lebanon, suspend bilateral negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, and have the Israeli parties and forces ride a wave of extremism in a feverish election race to win more votes.

We warn against the repercussions of such an Israeli escalation which is unprecedented in many years. We also fear that this violence carried out on such a large scale will produce negative results that will harm the entire peace process. At the same time, we call for a quick return to the negotiations and for ending this

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conflict by peaceful means. The past years of bloodshed have shown that occupation, shelling, and air raids cannot settle disputes; on the contrary, they aggravate the situation even further.

Jordan: Daily Urges Israel To Stop Military Operation in Lebanon

JN1404111996 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 14 Apr 96 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "Out of Fear for Lebanon and Keenness on the Peace Process]

[FBIS Translated Text] It seems that the military operation which Israel continues to wage against southern Lebanon is still in its early stages. All indications show that the situation is getting out of control, especially after the Israeli warplanes killed a number of children, and some quarter of a million Lebanese citizens were displaced in extremely harsh weather conditions. It is therefore quite justifiable for some countries to sound the alarm and urge self-restraint and abandonment of retaliatory trends. We are witnessing a vicious circle of violence that is expanding day after day, claiming the lives of many and causing more material losses. This circle also breeds fears and grudges and provokes revenge.

If this military operation, which involves the Israeli ground, naval, and air forces, is targeted against Hizballah bases, then it is inconceivable for the residents of 50 Lebanese villages to be displaced, for a naval blockade to be imposed on Lebanon's ports, and for children to be killed and civilians intimidated. This is not to mention the skirmishes with the Syrian troops in Beirut and other blatant acts of aggression which no party will utilise except Hizballah itself.

We are expressing our concern and shock vis-a-vis the expansion of the Israeli operation against a fraternal Arab people because we are aware of the highly negative repercussions that such an operation will have, not only on Lebanon, but also on the peace process, given that aggression drives civilians to turn against the option of peace in which we believe.

In light of all this, we join those who call on Israel to stop this blind reaction to the provocations that could be caused by the Hizballah operations. We call, along with all those who care about the peace process, for not being dragged into successive reactions which will be to the sole benefit of the enemies of peace and all those who seek to poison the atmosphere in the Middle East and create more obstacles to the peace process.

Jordan: Daily Condemns Israeli Moves, Supports Fighting Occupation

JN1404113596 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 14 Apr 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Violence Breeds Violence"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Once again, Israel is relying on its military might to jeopardise all that has been achieved on the path of bringing peace to the region. No one can justify Israel's unwarranted attacks on Lebanese civilians, towns and villages, nor can Israel argue that the use of force could bring quietness and stability to its northern borders.

Israel tried the option of war many times before, but it simply did not work. What the Israeli government can gain from the terror it is unleashing on the Lebanese people cannot exceed some short-term support for the Labour Party as it prepares for difficult elections next month. But what Israel stands to lose, along with the rest of the countries in the region that threw their lots behind the fledgling peace process, is much more substantial.

By killing civilians, destroying villages, and causing a mass flight of people, Israel is contributing to the notion that peace is unattainable in the region. There is no doubt that Israel, with its nuclear arsenal, and unlimited U.S. support is militarily superior to all its Arab neighbours. But this superiority never won Israel the peace of mind that it claims it wants.

Peace, in general, can prevail only when the rights of all are respected, when the norms of human civility are upheld. Israel has yet to meet both of these conditions. It still occupies Lebanese land in violation of international law and U.N. resolutions. Fighting occupation is a right recognised by all nations of the world. In the absence of any real indications that Israel is willing to end its occupation of Lebanese territory, not many can argue against the Lebanese people's right, even duty, to do what they can to free their land.

So is Israel's resort to indiscriminate killing of innocent people a clear evidence of Tel Aviv's unwillingness to see a just and lasting solution to the Middle East conflicts. The Arabs cannot trust a country that acts as if its military superiority gives it a licence to wreak havoc on the region whenever it chooses.

Israel's attack on Lebanon will have very negative implications for the whole peace process. People can only look at what Israel is doing in Lebanon, consider its inhumane closure of the Palestinian territories and come up with one conclusion: The Jewish state is not seeking peace, it is seeking an unlimited control of the region. That, no Arab can accept. And that will only

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embarrass the Arab parties to the peace process whose endeavours to convince their people of the viability of having peaceful and normal relations with Israel are being thwarted by Tel Aviv's policies.

Israel needs to make a choice as to what it wants in the region. It says it wants peace, but its actions belie this claim. A country which seeks peace does not go on attacking its neighbours. For the sake of the region, its peoples, including Israelis themselves, Israel should stop acting like the renegade cowboy of the neighbourhood.

Obviously there is a problem on the Lebanese border. But this problem is the making of Israel. Lebanon is saying that once Israel pulls its forces out of Lebanese land, it will stop its citizens from attacking Israel. This is a position that makes a whole lot more sense than the carnage of terror that Israel is reigning on thousands of Lebanese.

Jordan: U.S. Position on Israeli Action in Lebanon Criticized

JN1504172496 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 15 Apr 96 p 19

[Editorial: "Arab and International Efforts Needed To Halt Israeli Aggression"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The exacerbation of the situation and the tension in southern Lebanon over the last five days reminds one of the glaring contradiction between what is actually taking place on the ground — shelling, air raids, the destruction of homes, the displacement of citizens, and the killing of civilians — and what should be happening under the peace process. This shows that the language of war and destruction continues to be used more than four years after the peace process was launched in Madrid.

What is strange with respect to this situation is that the United States — the major sponsor of the peace process — did not lift a finger to halt the Israeli military activity and shelling, which has forced more than a quarter of a million Lebanese people to leave their homes. The official U.S. position on Israel's shelling of Beirut and southern Lebanon is that the United States supports the Israeli position. In an interview with CNN, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher described the shelling as some sort of legitimate response of self defense.

Israel's insistence on occupying parts of Lebanon, its refusal to withdraw in implementation of Security Council Resolution 425, and its attempt to dictate a series of terms on Lebanon that serve Israeli interests and goals are behind the ongoing tension in southern Lebanon. This position conflicts with international charters and norms. This position is a continued violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and a flagrant aggression against the rights and dignity of its citizens.

The U.S. bias toward Israel is a real obstacle to the success of any Arab and foreign effort to end the escalation. This biased attitude forestalls all serious Arab and international attempts to pressure Israel to end its military attacks.

More Arab and international efforts should be directed toward convincing the United States that the people in southern Lebanon are enduring a great deal of suffering and displacement, especially because the United States is the main sponsor of the peace process.

The situation should be rectified. The facts should be placed before the Israelis, and it should be asserted that it is impermissible to exploit military power and use it as a temporary political card to achieve a short-term goal: winning elections. People's destiny should never be viewed as a political game or an auction for bidding by extremist politicians.

Jordan: U.S. Planes Arrive for Exercises, Iraq Surveillance Flights

JN1304100996 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 13 Apr 96 pp 1, 7

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Thirty-four American jetfighters and transport planes arrived in Jordan on Friday [12 April] for training exercises with the Royal Jordanian Air Force and for carrying out, for a two-month-period, surveillance flights over southern Iraq in enforcement of a United Nations Security Council resolution.

The planes landed at a military air base at al-Azraq, north of Amman, and the joint exercises, code-named "Eager Tiger," are expected to start on Monday, officials said.

Details of the exercises are expected to be announced at a press conference early Saturday by U.S. and Jordanian military officers.

Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, in an interview with Middle East Broadcasting Corporation Television, said the total number of American service personnel taking part in the exercises was to be around 1,100, including pilots, assistant pilots and support crew.

The American contingent, named "Airpower Expeditionary Force" by the Pentagon and headed by General Bill Looney, will also carry out some repairs at al-Azraq so as to enable the air base to receive F-16s that Jordan is expected to receive this year from the United States, Mr. al-Kabariti said.

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Mr. al-Kabariti also told MBC some the U.S. planes would carry out surveillance flights over southern Iraq but would not fly there directly from Jordan. They will use the airspace of another neighbouring country. Mr. al-Kabariti did not identify the neighbouring country, but other officials have said that it was Saudi Arabia.

Jordanian pilots will not take part in the surveillance flights, which had to be launched from land for two months instead of Gulf-based aircraft carriers because of the temporary absence from the region of an aircraft during that period. The surveillance flights are scheduled to start Saturday.

Jordan is expected to receive 16 F-16 planes from the U.S. this year. The joint exercise this month and the presence of the American planes taking part in the exercises and the two-month surveillance flights over Iraq will afford Jordanian pilots to have field training on the aircraft, officials have said.

The planes taking part in the exercises and surveillance flights are 18 F-16s, 12 F-15s and four KC-135 tanker jets. Tents have been set up at the al-Azraq base to house the American and Jordanian personnel.

Officials have reiterated that the Kingdom would not be a party to any military operations against Iraq and would not allow its territory to be used in any strike on Iraq. The surveillance flights, they point out, come in line with U.N. Security Council Resolution 949, which calls on Iraq to desist from threatening military moves in the south of the country.

Resolution 949 was adopted in October 1994 after Iraq was seen massing troops on its border with Kuwait, raising concerns that it was poised for another invasion of the emirate which it occupied for seven months since August 1990 before being ousted by a U.S.-led military coalition.

Resolution 949 followed another similar decision by the Security Council in August 1992, declaring southern Iraq, down 32nd Parallel, a no-fly zone for winged Iraqi planes. That resolution was aimed at protecting Shiite Muslim rebels in southern Iraq who rose up against the Baghdad regime in the wake of the Gulf war over Kuwait that ended in February/March 1991.

Jordan: Official—U.S. Planes Not To Use Country's Border With Iraq

JN1304115996 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jordanian and U.S. officials said that the joint training exercises by Jordanian and U.S. planes were planned a long time ago and that these exercises are an extension of drills conducted by the Joint Air and Land Forces since the early 1980's.

In a joint news conference with Brigadier General Bill Looney, commander of the U.S. Air force in the joint drills, Major General Muhammad Khayr 'Ababinah, chief of staff of the Royal Jordanian Air Force, said that these drills will provide the Jordanian pilots with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the modern and advanced technical capabilities of the F-16 planes and the ground support equipment, given that Jordan will receive a number of these planes next year.

Maj. Gen. 'Ababinah said that the U.S. force participating in the drills brought with it a variety of ground equipment and machinery that constitute an important element in supporting the operations of these planes. Some of this equipment, he added, will remain in Jordan after the exercises are over and after the U.S. planes have returned home. This equipment, he said, will form the future infrastructure for the F-16's which will join the Jordanian Royal Air Force.

Answering a question on the U.S Air Force surveillance of the no-fly zone in southern Iraq, Maj. Gen. 'Ababinah said that in addition to the exercises, the U.S. planes — being part of the allied forces — will carry out their surveillance missions in southern Iraq in implementation of the Security Council resolution. However, he added, that in no case whatsoever, will these planes use the Jordanian-Iraqi borders for this purpose, adding that the Royal Jordanian Air Force planes will not take part in this mission.

Jordan: Iraqi Delegation Arrives To Buy $100 Million-Worth of Goods

JN1404110596 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 14 Apr 96 p 24

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman—An Iraqi economic delegation, representing the Trade and Industry Ministries, yesterday arrived in Amman to sign contracts with Jordanian companies that produce vegetable oil, detergents, and soaps in implementation of the commercial protocol signed by Jordan and Iraq in 1996.

The Iraqi delegation comprises the director general of the State Company for Trading in Foodstuffs, the director general of the State Enterprise for Vegetable Oil, and a number of senior government employees.

Well-informed sources told AL-DUSTUR that the value of the contracts to import vegetable oil and detergents will be around $100 million.

Rahim Tahir, director of the Iraqi Commercial Department in Amman, said that during their five-day visit,

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members of the Iraqi delegation will meet with a large number of officials in the Jordanian industrial companies that produce such goods. The delegation members will also meet with officials in the Industry and Trade Ministry and the Jordanian Export Promotion Organization.

The visit falls within the context of the brotherly economic ties between the two countries and aim to strengthen the economic and commercial ties.

The value of the Iraqi-Jordanian commercial protocol stands at around $220 million. According to the protocol, Jordan is paid in crude oil, oil byproducts, and gas for the goods it sells to Iraq.

Jordan: Prince Hasan Interviewed on Iraqi Affairs, Syrian Role

JN1204130396 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 11 Apr 96 p 3

[Interview with Crown Prince Hasan of Jordan by unidentified Kuwait AL-QABAS correspondent, published by AL-QABAS on 10 April; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [AL-QABAS] Was it a mistake to receive Saddam Husayn's two sons-in-law?

[Hasan] When His Majesty King Husayn decided to receive Husayn Kamil, he was taking into consideration the suffering of the Iraqi people. This was the reason for the storm that occurred within the Iraqi Government, something that we did not expect. A man [Husayn Kamil] arrived in Amman and made a telephone call from his hotel requesting political asylum.

[AL-QABAS] If you were aware that they [Kamil and his brother] would be killed, why did you allow them to return to Iraq?

[Hasan] No one sends another person to his death, but they were very self-confident and conceited. Sometimes, a person thinks he has become a legend.

[AL-QABAS] Were you surprised by the killing of the two sons-in-law?

[Hasan] I was shocked, but I was not surprised.

[AL-QABAS] What do you say about what happened?

[Hasan] I thought it might happen, but I did not think it would happen so soon.

[AL-QABAS] Did you try to dissuade them from returning?

[Hasan] This was their wish, and I was not directly involved in all this, but of course I was aware of what is going on.

[AL-QABAS] Anyhow, Jordan's relations with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait improved after this.

[Hasan] I do not think we are so cold-blooded that we would seek gains from an ugly crime against human beings. We are not of those who make such narrow calculations. As for our relations with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, we see now that the main suppliers of energy and even arm dealers rush to Baghdad, but when we make a small step (toward Iraq) shouts are heard all over the world. I wonder who is running the affairs of the region, Western businessmen or the leaders of the region?

[AL QABAS] Syria tries to curb the Jordanian interference in the Iraqi affairs. What do you say about this?

[Hasan] There is a big paradox when Syria hosts a conference that was named a meeting for toppling Saddam's regime, and we are asked not to interfere in the internal affairs of Iraq. [passage omitted]

[AL-QABAS] In all my visits to Jordan, I feel a complete separation between the Jordanians and the Palestinians.

[Hasan] The entire story is that people are proud of their roots.

[AL-QABAS] When was the last time you spoke to Saddam Husayn?

[Hasan] It was in February 1990. As for the future of that man, I am not one of those who try to predict the future. Why should I speak about other leaders? [passage omitted]

Jordan: Writer Attacks PA's 'Repulsive' Acts Against Palestinians

JN1204150496 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 12 Apr 96 p 24

["Horizons" column by Yasir Za'atirah: "Before the Explosion Occurs"]

[FBIS Translated Text] If Mr. Yasir 'Arafat believes that the Zionist entity has declared war on the Palestinian people, then by resorting to practices even the occupation authorities would be ashamed to use against the Palestinian people and their strugglers, the Palestinian Authority [PA] would be significantly contributing to this war. If the occupation authorities did resort to some of these practices at one point, it was because of their total hostility to the Palestinians.

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The Palestinian people in and outside the occupied territories, the Arab masses, and the international community witness the repulsive practices being carried out against those who support the Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement and the Islamic Jihad Movement. Everyone saw how thousands of Palestinians were imprisoned and remain imprisoned, and how the PA attacked civilian institutions, dispersed demonstrators with bullets and tear gas bombs, stormed universities—a practice condemned unanimously by all forces including Fatah—in a way even the occupation authorities did not use.

However, all this is nothing compared to the horrifying news leaked out of PA prisons about practices that honest people in the world condemn. Talking about flogging in prisons is nothing compared to the violations committed against the honor of the prisoners to force them to confess and abstain from political activity. What is even worse, is that all or part of these practices against the prisoners are videotaped to be used later for blackmail purposes.

The occupation authorities have not resorted to such measures yet, and even if they had, it was to expose the agents, the same agents who infiltrated the police force and began to practice the same thing against the noble strugglers. This does not mean that these agents commit such crimes upon their personal initiative; the PA leaders are responsible for this because they unleashed the hands of such people to punish the noble strugglers in whom the Palestinian people take pride.

It is not enough for PA leaders to transfer an officer or interrogate another to absolve themselves of responsibility. As a matter of fact, it is those who do not follow the orders violating the Palestinian people's rights who are punished, and not the opposite, and Colonel Misbah Saqr is a case in point.

We can no longer tolerate the situation. Anything is possible from now on. Those whose honor is being violated in the torture houses will not be able to act rationally as those who are in safe places want them to act.

Jordan: 'Numerous' Hamas Arrests So Far; 'Campaign Will Continue'

MM1604104696 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 Apr 96 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Numerous Arrests Among Hamas Ranks in Jordan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Informed Jordanian sources have revealed that the Jordanian authorities have made numerous arrests among the ranks of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in Jordan. The sources said that some deputies of the "Islamic forces" front have made contacts with Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti concerning these arrests. He referred them to Major General Samih al-Battikhi, director of public intelligence. The measures were taken following the protest made by Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat at Jordan's sheltering of Hamas leaders.

The sources added that Jordanian security authorities told the deputies that the arrests were made in accordance with the laws in force, and that the campaign will continue against members of Hamas and the Islamic forces sympathizing with it. The sources pointed out that a number of members were arrested last week, among them Iyad Hilmi Sadaqah, Tahir Lafi, Mansur al-Farrukh, Majdi al-Farrukh, Rajab Saqr, 'Ali al-Jalakh, Walid Taylakh, Khalid Abu-Ghazalah, Faysal al-Ra'i, Husayn 'Awdah, Badi Rafay'ah, Murad al-Fadaylah, and Shihdah Dhib.

The sources confirmed that security forces stormed a computer company in the al-'Abdali area in Amman last Wednesday [10 April] and arrested its manager and all those who were there at the time, closing the offices down because of the manager's link with Hamas' activities. Islamic deputies confirmed that they held meetings with Maj. Gen. al-Battikhi, other security officials, and some government directors and ministers, saying that they tried to calm the situation with the government in the wake of the arrest campaign.

The informed sources said that the deputies in question are: 'Abdallah al-'Akaylah, 'Abd-al-Rahim al-'Ukur, Bassam al-'Amush, Hamzah Mansur, Ibrahim al-Kilani, and Muhammad 'Uwaydah. They met with security officials in Jordan at the request of the prime minister, who urged them to continue to communicate and interact with state organs. He also expressed full willingness to deal with them and to take account of their remarks and criticisms.

Jordan: Al-Nusur—36 Terrorist Attempts 'Foiled'

JN1204160196 Amman SHIHAN in Arabic 13-18 Apr 96 p 6

[Interview with Higher Education Minister 'Abdallah al-Nusur by Jihad Abu-Baydar in Amman; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Abu-Baydar] The prime minister said 36 terrorist attempts against Jordan have been foiled. Although he said they were documented, only one operation was disclosed. Everybody wonders about these operations and the parties that are behind them.

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[Al-Nusur] The prime minister was right when he said there have been 36 operations; there have been exactly 36 operations. Were it not for God's mercy, some five or six of these operations would have been carried out by terrorists targeting the country's security. Citizens would have also wondered if the government and its organs were carrying out their duties. But with God's help, the 36 attempts were foiled. This shows that the government is able to protect the citizen's security and that the security organs are able to foil such operations.

[Abu-Baydar] Your Excellency Abu-Zuhayr ['Abdallah al-Nusur], who is behind these operations?

[Al-Nusur] We will expose them at the right time.

[Abu-Baydar] Can't you disclose the identities of at least some of them?

[Al-Nusur] I told you that they would be exposed at the right time.

[Abu-Baydar] Your Excellency Abu-Zuhayr, is it true that some of these operations targeted the prime minister?

[Al-Nusur] Yes, some of them targeted the prime minister, but they were foiled.

[Abu-Baydar] Can you disclose details on these attempts and who was behind them?

[Al-Nusur] They are internal and external parties and their identities will be disclosed later. [passage omitted]

Jordan: PM al-Kabariti Interviewed on Topical Issues

NC1304020596 London MBC Television in Arabic 1530 GMT 12 Apr 96

[Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti interviewed by MBC correspondent Sa'd al-Silawi in Amman on 10 April—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Al-Silawi] We welcome Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti to this interview with the MBC. His Majesty King Husayn entrusted you with staging a white revolution. Perhaps he meant effecting a change. Do you believe that the previous situation required a change?

[Al-Kabariti] We believe that the situation in Jordan has changed. We also believe that the measure of tolerance regarding democracy, public freedoms, investment, security, peace, and stability requires a new outlook and plan to benefit from these changes in the political and economic climate. I believe that there is a favorable opportunity to respond to the challenges and seize the opportunities of the future.

[Al-Silawi] Where have you reached in your white revolution for change?

[Al-Kabariti] The process involves restructuring to take advantage of the available expertise and to unleash the creative potential in Jordan. We believe that we have completed restructuring the security agencies and have begun restructuring the media agencies. We believe in an objective and gradual progress. We do not want to create an atmosphere that may trigger frustrations. We want the hardworking people to feel that opportunities are guaranteed as part of the process of restructuring and change. I believe that we have succeeded in our efforts over the past two months. However, our mission will take a long time. The letter of designation is clear and we are not in a hurry.

[Al-Silawi] There was talk in the past about corruption and there were attempts to limit corruption. Will the process of combating corruption be selective or will you not distinguish between people in this process?

[Al-Kabariti] In fact, corruption has various definitions. Basically, this government is opposed to all forms of corruption and will not be lenient in combating all aspects of corruption. We are not seeking to contain it, but to pursue and eradicate it. We are not claiming that we will be able to eliminate it completely, but we maintain that the law and active democracy will be used in the fight against corruption.

[Al-Silawi] Is it true that former officials were involved in corruption, as far as you know?

[Al-Kabariti] I have no information about any cases relating to former officials. We want to show that the government effort is not focused on the past. We do not want to look for victims, but to be able to punish offenders and reward the sincere and hardworking people. This is the policy we are pursuing. If there is any individual that we believe made mistakes and broke the law, he will be tried according to the law. However, we will not defame and point accusing fingers without incontrovertible evidence to bring such officials to court. The government will never do this. We esteem and appreciate and are proud of the performance of all former governments. This government is an extension of former ones. As I have already said, our achievements have accumulated over the years and no one government can claim being distinguished from former ones.

[Al-Silawi] As part of the domestic situation, I would like to ask about the government's relations with the Parliament. The government some time ago confronted the Senate and foiled attempts by certain senators to cast doubt on the professional associations. At the same time, the government arrested the doyen of the

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Engineers Association. Do you not believe that there is a contradiction in this?

[Al-Kabariti] I do not believe that there is any connection between the two issues. The dialogue and confrontation that take place in the Parliament are part of the democratic process. The dialogue that took place, and the results reached regarding the professional associations, give proof that democracy in Jordan is working and that it has succeeded and can serve as the basis for all our economic, political, and social activities. The arrest of Layth Shubaylat, or any other personality or citizen, is based on evidence submitted by the public prosecutor to the court for trial. When verdicts are handed down, we say without any embarrassment that the verdicts of the courts are based on absolute truth. We will always stick to the truth, God willing.

[Al-Silawi] Do you not believe that the arrest of the doyen of the Engineers Association will affect the democratic image of the government?

[Al-Kabariti] We do not arrest doyens, ministers, or individuals according to their posts. We refer individuals to courts in accordance with documents, evidence, and decisions made by the public prosecutor. The government has no scores to settle nor does it bear a grudge in its decisionmaking, which would reflect on the country and the performance of the people.

[Al-Silawi] Certain people believe that the government has succeeded in cleverly penetrating the opposition and dividing its ranks. First, it succeeded in the formation of the government when you enabled a leftist deputy to become a minister and, second, when two members of the Islamic movement, the opposition stronghold in the Parliament, resigned. Is it a policy of the government to divide the opposition?

[Al-Kabariti] I am a son of the rejuvenated democracy in Jordan and I have 5served as a deputy since 1989. I am very well aware of the principles of the democratic game and know well how to deal with all political spectrums in Jordan. It is not an objective of the government to divide any organization. The basic objective of this government is setting forth the motto of let us work together hand in hand. From this premise, I consulted with all political spectrums during the formation of this government. I offered the opportunity to all political forces to participate in forming the government and contribute to the new structure and the cherished process of transformation and change as outlined in the royal letter of designation. Those who agreed were welcome to participate, and those who refused we will treat with them as part of the state and of national action. We consider that the national opposition in Jordan have a role that we esteem and appreciate. We may agree or disagree, but ultimately we have no objective to divide any organization.

[Al-Silawi] Perhaps this question, which relates to domestic policy, may be a suitable approach to move to foreign policy. You announced two weeks ago that the security agencies uncovered terrorist plots that sought to carry out subversive operations in Jordan. Can you give us more details?

[Al-Kabariti] The results of the investigations have not appeared yet. Jordan has always been, and continues to be, targeted and Jordan's national security is targeted. All I can say is that we will absolutely not be lenient in safeguarding our national security, nor will we accept, under any circumstances, Jordan being a launching pad for any terrorist or subversive acts against Jordan's national security, or even the peace process and the Palestinian National Authority.

[Al-Silawi] Did any countries or organizations support these operations?

[Al-Kabariti] The terrorist forces in the world cannot act apart from parties and forces that support them in terms of funds, organization, and moral support. We have precise knowledge of the parties that stand behind all terrorist forces that have been activated against Jordan's national security, the Palestinian security, and the peace process.

[Al-Silawi] There are press reports that Iraq was behind some of these attempts, including an abortive attempt that targeted you. Is this true?

[Al-Kabariti] When the investigations are over, the results will be referred to the competent Jordanian judicial agencies. Anyone responsible for any acts in Jordan will be provided a fair trial, as has always been the case in Jordan.

[Al-Silawi] So the reports that Iraq was behind some of these attempts are not true?

[Al-Kabariti] When the investigations are over, anyone responsible for any acts will be brought to trial and will be given all legal guarantees for a fair trial.

[Al-Silawi] There has obviously been a major turnabout in Jordan's relations with Iraq. How do you justify this?

[Al-Kabariti] I do not think there has been a turnabout or any change in Jordan's position. I said on various occasions that Jordan's position has always been clear and cohesive. The difference is only in the way this position has been expressed. Perhaps the Jordanian decisionmaker had very noble objectives in mind when he adopted the policy of calm diplomacy and continuous

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advice to Iraq, without announcing Jordan's real position. I believe that in the past two years, we found that it was no longer possible to remain silent and to adopt calm diplomacy. We found that every Jordanian piece of advice [to Iraq], every Jordanian proposal to lift the suffering of the Iraqi people, and every Jordanian attempt to end the Iraqi tragedy failed. So we started to express our ideas frankly and loudly. This is the only change. But Jordan's position has always been clear.

[Al-Silawi] They say that Mr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti is the one who is now leading the campaign against Iraq, and that perhaps there are personal motives for this; for example, Iraqi officials criticized you on many occasions. Is this true?

[Al-Kabariti] When I was a foreign minister, every position I adopted fully reflected my personal views, which were in harmony with general Jordanian policy. As I told you, Jordan's policy toward Iraq was basically aimed at ending the suffering of the Iraqi people and enabling Iraq to restore its Arab and international role. This proceeded from Jordan's firm convention that Iraq has a basic and main role to play and that Iraq, with its natural and human resources, is a great country that should not be deprived of the chance to benefit from this status and to play the hoped-for Arab role. I honestly believe that foreign forces, as well as internal Iraqi forces, do not want the Iraqi people to exercise their rights; they do not want Iraq to unite and regain its role. Perhaps the blame lies with the group that thinks only of itself, its continuation [in power], and the sovereignty of its decision, which absolutely do not serve the interests of the Iraqi people.

[Al-Silawi] Jordan now hosts Iraqi opposition forces. Some say that Jordan has not yet succeeded in organizing the ranks of the opposition, and as a result, it may lose both the opposition and its relations with Iraq. What do you have to say about this?

[Al-Kabariti] Jordan has not assumed the role of custodian of any Arab political organization or group, whether loyalist or oppositionist. All that we tried to do is unite the Iraqi effort, help the Iraqis come up with a formula on the future constitutional form of Iraq to preserve the unity of the country's land and people, and end the current divisions. You find that divisions are deepening day after day; even the elections in the country excluded certain regions and citizens. We do not want this to continue, because if it continues, it necessarily means the division of Iraq. When we allow some trends and representatives of the Iraqi groups to express their positions through a conference or meetings, we think this may help bring about a compromise formula to lay the foundations for Iraq's constitutional form in a way that brings people together, not sets them apart, that preserves the country, not divides it. For instance, the idea of a federation was proposed by some Iraqi groups. Once again, we are surprised that when Jordan tries to defend Iraq's position and unite Iraqi action, it is accused of engaging in a conspiracy against Iraq. But when another side works in the same direction, uses the same method, and calls for the same thing Jordan is calling for, this is considered a nationalist action. This kind of double-standard and hypocrisy Jordan does not accept at all.

[Al-Silawi] Jordan is clearly trying to lift the suffering of the Iraqi people. But, Mr. prime minister, do you think that the suffering and the embargo can be removed under the current political circumstances and while President Saddam Husayn is still in power?

[Al-Kabariti] I would first like to ask: Does any country in the world, other than Jordan, maintain an open border with Iraq and strong ties with the Iraqi people? I do not think so. How can those who are now calling for meetings [of the Iraqi opposition] and for deterring the sides that they say interfere in Iraq's affairs reconcile these calls and this policy with their own call on the opposition parties to ask this particular state to call for opening the border with Iraq? [sentence as heard] Does the opening of the border with Iraq need authorization from the Iraqi opposition? Do you think that those who closed the border with Iraq and stopped the passage of oil, even before the Gulf war, can be serious and sincere on ending the suffering of the Iraqi people?

[Al-Silawi] His majesty the king has repeatedly said that there is need for change in Iraq to lift the suffering. Do you still think so?

[Al-Kabariti] Yes, the current foreign blockade against Iraq, and the internal blockade inside Iraq, effectively call for change so that the Iraqi people can exercise their rights and restore their unity and role. Yes, change is a must. I believe that if Iraq is to benefit from all available chances and to play the role to which it is qualified by virtue of its size and power, then change is a must.

[Al-Silawi] This is a question about the defection of Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil Hasan and then his return to Iraq and his death there. Some say that he experienced a difficult psychological reaction and that Jordan did not allow him enough movement to help him effect change in Iraq.

[Al-Kabariti] Husayn Kamil found in Jordan what he could not find anywhere else in the world. As regards his psychological state, I cannot comment on it. All indications were that Husayn Kamil had personal problems with members of his family, with 'Udayy in

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particular. Perhaps he thought that by staying in Jordan he could achieve political advantages and solve his personal problems with his family. Perhaps after he and the daughters of President Saddam Husayn and their families spent some time in Jordan, he thought he could solve his problem and that he had a chance to return to Iraq as a dignified citizen, in accordance with the Iraqi republican decree. We know what the result was, and we know what happened to that Iraqi citizen and what is happening to other Iraqi citizens.

[Al-Silawi] How are you going to treat Lieutenant General Nizar al-Khazraji, the former Iraqi official who sought refuge in Jordan?

[Al-Kabariti] He cannot be described as refugee. He came to Jordan like any other visitor from a fraternal Arab country. Perhaps we will need some time before we understand from him his future plans. So far, I do not really have anything to say about al-Khazraji. Maybe you will have a chance to meet him in the future and give him an opportunity to talk about his future programs.

[Al-Silawi] I would like to ask the outcome of Jordan's contacts with the United States, concerning U.S. planes and flights over Iraq proceeding from Jordan. Will U.S. planes fly over Iraq starting from Jordanian territory?

[Al-Kabariti] Advance units of the U.S. Air Force have begun arriving in Jordan. Many U.S. personnel and soldiers have begun preparing for the arrival of the planes. U.S. military personnel will number 1,100 and will be comprised of pilots, assistant pilots, and auxiliary personnel. These forces will stay in tents for a limited, specific period, and they will work to greatly improve some air bases to help Jordan receive the F-16's that will arrive next year. They will also carry out intensive training sorties with the Jordanian pilots who will pilot the F-16's, God willing. They will also carry out surveillance flights over southern Iraq, in keeping with UN Security Council Resolution 944. I stress to you that these flights will not be from Jordan to Iraq directly, but will pass through a number of Arab countries.

[Al-Silawi] But will they start from bases in Jordan?

[Al-Kabariti] The planes will take off from Jordan for Arab airspace and then enter Iraq. They will not be direct flights from Jordan to Iraq.

[Al-Silawi] Have you taken into consideration the Iraqi reaction to these flights? Maybe Iraq will consider this an aggression against it. Isn't this so?

[Al-Kabariti] This is not something new. It has been done since the Gulf war. These flights, whether over the north or the south, are routine and are carried out on a daily basis by various quarters. Sometimes the planes take off from ground airfields and sometimes from aircraft carriers. So, there is nothing new here.

[Al-Silawi] There has been talk recently about setting up camps for the Iraqis in al-Azraq. Does the Jordanian Government have plans to do that?

[Al-Kabariti] In fact, I read and heard this report in the media. The Jordanian Government in no way discussed any matter related to the establishment of camps or installations to receive the Iraqis.

[Al-Silawi] Let us focus on the Iraqi issue, which is very sensitive. The material you apprehended, the aircraft spare parts and similar material, violated the UN resolutions. Three attempts to ship similar material were registered in three months. Were such materials being smuggled to Iraq in the past, before you took charge of the government; and what is the position the Jordanian Government will assume and the measures it might take in case such attempts are repeated?

[Al-Kabariti] First of all, we will in no way allow Jordan to be used as a passage way or center for any equipment that violates the UN Security Council and international resolutions.

Moreover, the approach pursued in the past to leak some prohibited equipment to Iraq was creative. It depended primarily on arranging the shipments so that each shipment weighed less than 1 kg. They were shipped in the name of imaginary companies across many states. The documents were fake in most cases; they indicated that the material was either electrical devices or equipment allowed in Jordan. The things looked as though the material was sent to a Jordanian establishment for use in Jordan. They then remained in the free zone or were cleared and the customs taxes paid, as though they were material exported to Jordanian companies. They were then smuggled to Iraq. From the beginning, the matter was arranged with the purpose of smuggling and concealing accurate data from the control authorities, whether the customs or security agencies.

[Al-Silawi] Then the government is determined to tighten inspection measures and uncover the companies involved. Only one company has been exposed?

[Al-Kabariti] More than one company. We are serious in our efforts to expose all the imaginary companies that were used in the past as facades for cooperation with the Iraqi regime to facilitate the passage of banned material. We will not allow this. We will fight it. We will not only close these companies, we will also put them on trial.

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[Al-Silawi] Let us move on to Arab relations. Your calm diplomacy has succeeded in reproaching views and turning a new chapter between Jordan and Saudi Arabia. This resulted in a visit his majesty the king paid to Saudi Arabia to perform the minor pilgrimage and meet with Saudi officials. However, the follow up on these steps is not clear. You announced that the Jordanian-Saudi committee will meet. So far, no follow up has been registered after his majesty's visit.

[Al-Kabariti] The follow up continues and relations are being consolidated. His Royal Highness Prince Bandar Bin-Sultan will host a dinner banquet in honor of his majesty the king next week, before his visit to Amman. Our telephone contacts continue, although we do not announce them. The Jordanian minister of trade has been selected as chairman of the Jordanian delegation. Saudi Arabia announced yesterday that its trade minister, His Highness Shaykh al-Faqih, will be the chairman of the Saudi delegation to the joint ministerial committee meetings. A contact was held yesterday between the Jordanian trade minister and his Saudi counterpart. They agreed to hold a meeting of experts to lay the foundations to revive earlier agreements and discuss new agreements. This can enhance, expand, and consolidate relations in the different scopes, particularly the economic. I believe that the experts meetings will begin immediately after 'Id holidays, God willing.

[Al-Silawi] What about relations with Kuwait, particularly since messages were exchanged between the Jordanian heir apparent and his Kuwaiti counterpart? Where do relations with Kuwait stand?

[Al-Kabariti] Our contacts with Kuwait are continuing. We are confident that we will reach the stage were relations between us and Kuwait return to what they should be. We are aware that there are domestic circumstances in Kuwait that might not help step up the process as much as we want. We understand these circumstances and hope all states will understand and appreciate the Jordanian circumstances, which require stepping up the restoration of relations with Arabs and taking it from the state of the fait accompli to a better and more noble state, so that we can face the challenges that concern us all.

[Al-Silawi] Talking about the Gulf, we would like to ask about the incidents that occurred in Bahrain. There were contacts between you and the Bahraini prime minister and other officials. What was the nature of your contacts?

[Al-Kabariti] The Jordanian position on the situation in Bahrain is clear. I expressed it on more than one occasion. We stand by Bahrain. We expressed our full preparedness on more than one occasion to provide all the necessary assistance to Bahrain. We will respond to any request Bahrain might make. Our position on Bahrain is one of a brother that backs, supports, and assists without any embarrassment.

[Al-Silawi] I will move on to relations with Israel. Some people think that there was haste in setting up economic ties between Arab states and Israel in the absence of a political solution, particularly on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, and under the policy of closure Israel is pursuing against the Palestinian people.

[Al-Kabariti] We believe that the siege against the Palestinian people at the present stage falls in the context of counterviolence. In fact, we are using all the capabilities available to us to lift the sufferings and the siege on the Palestinian people. We actually want the peace process to regain momentum and to continue. We want the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations to resume so that the Palestinian people can achieve their objectives.

We believe that what has already been achieved is a great accomplishment on which more can be built to establish the Palestinian state and enable the Palestinian people to restore and exercise their rights. We do not want some extremist powers and the powers who do not want the peace process to continue to have the upper hand. We do not want the violent and criminal conduct they pursue to mark the coming stage. We hope the Palestinian National Authority and the Israeli Government will be able to overcome this difficult stage and return to the negotiating table. We are confident that this will happen in the near future. I believe that there is responsiveness on Israel's part concerning the resumption of talks and the implementation of the agreements. God willing, this will happen as soon as possible, particularly the withdrawal from Hebron and preparations for the final stage negotiations.

[Al-Silawi] Arab citizens are wondering and they pose this question to those who meet with the Israel officials. There is a kind of contradiction. Extremism is unwanted by all. But you see someone who kills one of Israel's heroes, the hero of peace. The Arab citizens see him on television screens laughing. In contrast, you see another extremist who blows himself up and harms innocent people. But you find Israel demolishing his home and displacing his family. They even demolish rented homes. Is this subject ever discussed with the Israeli officials, so that Arab citizens can somehow accept peace with them?

[Al-Kabariti] Jordan has repeatedly expressed its views on this matter clearly and frankly. The matter concerns several practices. We have always said that there is a wide gap between international legitimacy and international justice; between the meaning of legitimacy

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and the meaning of justice. We in Jordan always try to narrow this gap. We do not talk about legitimacy unless there is harmony and accord with the concept of justice.

Yes, I believe that there is a contradiction. We discussed it several times. We hope all the parties to the peace equation will be able to deal with the powers of evil, violence, and extremism according to the same criteria.

[Al-Silawi] We might be on the threshold of the final solution stage. There was a recent announcement that Jordan has nothing to do with the final solution. Is this true?

[Al-Kabariti] Jordan will not agree to be an instrument of pressure in anyone's hand. Jordan's position must be clear to all the parties. Our position backs, supports, and props the Palestinian National Authority. This is the same position voiced by his majesty the king. He said that we are with the Palestinian state, with its capital Jerusalem, and that we are with His Excellency President Abu-'Ammr [Yasir 'Arafat] and anything that is bound to serve the objectives of the Palestinian National Authority. We will not let Jordan's role or effort be a cause for influencing or putting pressure on the Palestinian negotiators. If the Palestinian negotiator wishes to seek the assistance of the Jordanian experts, or if he wants a Jordanian role he believes can support him in achieving his goals, we will respond. All we want is to see the Palestinian state established and the Palestinian wishes accomplished.

[Al-Silawi] How do you view the military agreement signed between Turkey and Israel on using airports. Do you believe that it poses a threat to the Arab nation?

[Al-Kabariti] Press reports on this matter are conflicting. Until we know the details of this agreement, I repeat that Jordan's relations with Israel will continue to be governed by the soul and text of the peace agreement. Turkey is a Muslim state that has its own role. We believe that we have to respect the Turkish role in the region. We hope this Turkish role will be positive and complete the roles of the east Mediterranean states, so that we can give an impetus to the peace process.

[Al-Silawi] At the end of this meeting, we thank Mr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, the Jordanian prime minister, for this interview.

[Al-Kabariti] Thanks to you.

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Lebanon: Prime Minister Views Israeli Offensive, Occupation

LD1504180096 Paris France-Info Radio in French 1617 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Interview with Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri by Patrick Boyer in Beirut; date not given — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Boyer] Our guest today is Mr. Rafiq al- Hariri, prime minister of Lebanon. Hello, Mr. Prime Minister.

[Al-Hariri] Hello.

[Boyer] Today, you showed feelings of helplessness over the situation in your country. Lebanon has apparently no other option but to turn to the international community ?

[Al-Hariri] This country, Lebanon, has paid a very high price as a result of the war and the conflict in the Middle East. Now the war has ended in our country, but part of our territory is still occupied. Twelve percent of our territory is occupied by Israel. Israel says that it is occupying this part of our country to ensure the security of northern Israel. They have been there since 1978, and since then security has never been assured in Israel. We have a strong central government. We have an army and we are ready to guarantee security on our territory, even on the occupied territory. However it is necessary for Israel to find a solution, a means to withdraw its troops.

[Boyer] You have disarmed almost all the militias: the Phalangists, the Druze, the Sunnis. Why have you not been able to disarm the Shiite hizballah ?

[Al-Hariri] You know we have disarmed the Shiite militias — the Amal and a part of hizballah — outside of the occupied zone. But we have not disarmed the Lebanese resistance. You know when there is an occupation there is always a resistance. This resistance is represented by the hizballah, by others. It is does not matter. The most important thing is that occupation always brings about resistance to this occupation.

[Boyer] The use of the word resistance shocks France. You have already made an analogy with the French Resistance. Now the hizballah is an extremist organization which belongs to a group which denies Israel the right to exist. Such a comparison cannot be made.

[Al-Hariri] No, no. This comparison can be made because... [pauses] listen. During the war — World War II — when the Nazis occupied France, there were two points of view. There was the point of view of Petain and that of de Gaulle. De Gaulle gave all his help and support to the French Resistance, which was, at the time, largely made up of communists.

What are the Israelis trying to ask us? Simply, there is the occupation. There is hizballah which is making life difficult for the occupation. They are asking me to facilitate the life of Israelis during their occupation of my territory.

[Boyer] Do you not think that they are rather asking for peace in Galilee? Is it normal for Qiryat Shemona to be bombed?

[Al-Hariri] No, it is not normal. It is not normal. I am telling you it is not normal. I am saying that I do not accept at all the deaths and killings of civilians, neither on this side nor on the other side. But, first and foremost, I do not accept the occupation of my country.

[Boyer] Mr. Prime Minister, you keep talking about occupation. There are 35,000 Syrian soldiers in Lebanon; that is also another kind of occupation.

[Al-Hariri] No, no, it is not an occupation. It was the Lebanese Government which asked the Syrians to come to Lebanon. That is completely different. The Syrians are not an occupying force, they are not occcupying Lebanon.

[Boyer] They have control over many things, including perhaps the hizballah?

[Al-Hariri] They have control over many things, yes. The Syrians, and perhaps others, have influence over the hizballah.

[Boyer] The hizballah takes its inspiration from Tehran and is armed by Damascus.

[Al-Hariri] Iran has many weapons too. Finding weapons for people is not really very difficult, and you know that this is the case everywhere, not just in Lebanon.

[Boyer] President Jacques Chirac phoned Shim'on Peres yesterday to tell him that his riposte was out of proportion, and Mr. Peres answered him: If Strasbourg was being shelled from German territory you would do the same thing. Do you understand this way of thinking?

[Al-Hariri] Yes, yes, I understand it very well. If Germany occupied part of France... [pauses] it is true... [pauses] but Peres knows very well that everything that is happening there is also due to his occupation of the Lebanon. Peres would be right if Israeli troops were not occupying part of our territory.

[Boyer] The scale of Shim'on Peres's riposte has to do with the elections in Israel, quite obviously, but the hizballah knew about this electoral context.

[Al-Hariri] Yes, very well.

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[Boyer] It has struck now out of provocation, has it not?

[Al-Hariri] In that case, if what you say is true, it means that everyone is playing the hizballah's game. If the hizballah does not want to see Peres in hismposition in 45 days... [pauses] also, the Israeli army is not totally with Peres. Perhaps (?he) started the problem too because the problem was started by the Israelis. [sentence as heard]

There are people on both sides who do not want Peres to succeed in the elections. We ourselves are paying the price. Lebanon is now paying the price for the elections in Israel.

[Boyer] Do you feel that movements such as the hizballah or Hamas have the power to derail the peace process?

[Al-Hariri] They are trying, they are trying. What are they doing? Hamas has tried to give more chances to Netanyahu to win and fewer chances to Peres, and the hizballah may be doing the same thing. What does this mean? What does this mean? Israel should not play the hizballah game. Indeed, if this war continues until the elections, do you think that Peres can win? Never.

[Boyer] Do you feel that your country, Lebanon, is in a way a ground for maneuvers, shows of strength, and conflicts which do not concern it directly?

[Al-Hariri] Yes, you can say that, but that is not the whole truth. Israel must understand that I for one am a man of peace. I want peace. I understand very well that peace will come one day and we will live together, but we must give the people of peace who have a strong belief in peace the chance to work well.

[Boyer] To conclude. Prime Minister, you understand that as long as the Galilee is threatened, Lebanon will not live in peace, don't you?

[Al-Hariri] And as long as part of Lebanon is occupied, Galilee will never live in peace. What is this but a vicious circle? That is why I have said that the solution does not require a military solution but a political solution.

Lebanon: South Residents Asked Not To Move Southward

NC1504182996 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1804 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Communique No. 10 "for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To the residents of the south: Once again you are requested not to travel southward. Everyone who does so will expose himself to danger at his own risk. He who forewarns is excused. However, going northward is still permissible.

Lebanon: Israelis Continue Bombarding South; Katyusha Fired

NC1504183396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli artillery bombardment of the villages of Suhmur, Yuhmur, and 'Ayn al-Tinah has grown violent. The Israelis are firing five rounds per minute. Two homes belonging to Su'ad Karim and Fahd As'ad in Suhmur have been hit. The bombardment is continuing.

The resistance has stated that it fired a new round of Katyusha rockets at Nahariyya settlement at 1925 [1625 GMT].

Lebanon: Speaker Birri, Syria's Khaddam Discuss Situation

NC1504183596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam have held talks over the telephone on the current situation. They exchanged views on developments in Lebanon and the results of the contacts that have been held on several levels to halt the bestial aggression against Lebanon and the south.

Lebanon: Hizballah Threatens To Bombard All of Northern Israel

NC1504185796 Paris AFP in English 1851 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, April 15 (AFP) — The Iranian- backed Hizballah said it would bombard the whole of northern Israel from the border with Lebanon to the town of Nahariyya, 12 kilometres (eight miles) to the south, from late Monday [15 April].

Lebanon: Israeli Warplanes Attack Suhmur, Yuhmur

NC1504185996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1843 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: According to the most recent reports from the south and Western al-Biqa', Israeli warplanes raided the residential quarters of Suhmur and Yuhmur at 2100 [1800 GMT]. At 2120, the Israeli warplanes attacked a civilian car in Bra'shit.

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Lebanon: Electricity Plant 'Fully Destroyed,' Rationing Imposed

NC1504190496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1830 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Lebanese Electricity Authority has issued the following statement: The Israeli aggression on the electricity substation in Bsalim this afternoon completely destroyed the facility. This substation is fed by the production plant in Zuq Mikha'il, and it feeds most Lebanese regions. Therefore its is no longer possible to provide these regions with electricity. The Authority will impose strict rationing on the distribution of electricity, and some areas will be in total darkness. This will continue until the Authority installs new equipment, which will take a long time. The Authority will keep people informed of developments.

Lebanon: Radio Reports Israeli Air Raid, Overflights

NC1504191396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY, the enemy aircraft are currently staging air raids on Qana. Meanwhile, enemy helicopters are flying over the south.

Lebanon: Hizballah Threatens To Bomb Tourist, Civilian Facilities

NC1504193896 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1925 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A military statement released by Hizballah said that as of this evening Hizballah will bombard the periphery of the occupied Golan heights and all tourist and civilian facilities in northern Israel up to parallel 33.

Lebanon: Israelis Bombard Haris; al-Biqa' Power Plant Hit

NC1504201996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At 2215 [1915 GMT] today, an Israeli tank directed a destructive concentrated barrage at the town of Haris. The Israelis also pounded Mayfadun and Qa'qa'iyat al-Jisr. Israeli warplanes are flying over al-Nabatiyah and carrying out mock raids.

Meanwhile, security sources confirmed reports that the power plant in Markaba in western al-Biqa' has been bombed. They confirmed that more than 50 155-mm rounds hit the plant, causing extensive damage. It is not possible yet to determine the magnitude of the damage.

Lebanon: Hizballah Threat Includes 'Military Settlements'

NC1504195796 Paris AFP in English 1925 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, April 15 (AFP) — The Iranian- backed Hizballah said it would unleash a wave of attacks against the whole of northern Israel from late Monday [15 April].

A statement issued by the fundamentalist group said its guerrillas would bombard "all tourist establishments, economic and military settlements between the Lebanese border and the 33rd Parallel ... including the settlements at the foot of the Golan Heights" captured by Israel in 1967.

It said its main targets would be the town of Nahariyya on the 33rd parallel, 12 kilometres (eight miles) south of the border, as well as Zefat to the southwest and Sombor on the edge of the Golan.

So far Katyusha rockets fired by Hizballah for four straight days have only struck towns and villages close to the Israel-Lebanon border. Around 10 Israelis have been hurt in the attacks.

Lebanon: French TV Views Situation in South

LD1504201996 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1800 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] It must be pointed out that the initial Israeli targets are the pro-Iranian Hizballah militiamen installed in the south of Lebanon who have been bombing northern Israel on a regular basis for years now.

The Lebanese Government does not have any control over these militiamen. As for the Syrians, they more or less leave them alone. Eric Monier and Philippe Turpaud report:

[Begin recording] [Monier] At the major crossroads in Beirut today, just like on any day since the beginning of the Israeli offensive, Hizballah activists are collecting funds for the refugees from the south who have flocked to the capital. [passage omitted]

At the [Hizballah] Movement Information Bureau in the center of Beirut, journalists are received without appointment as long as they are not American or suspected of supporting Israeli reprisals:

[Nawaf Moussawi, Hizballah Political Council member] Today, more than ever, the Lebanese people south of the Biqa' [valley] and in the north, throughout Lebanon, have shown a lot of solidarity with our resistance

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movement, which they see as the only solution to Israeli aggression. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Carry Out 2 Raids on Suhmur

NC1504204396 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2030 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in: According to our correspondent in al-Biqa', Israeli military aircraft carried out two air raids on the town of Suhmur in Western al-Biqa', the first at 2305 [2005 GMT] and the second at 2310 today. There are no reports yet on casualties or damage.

Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Bomb Home in al-Biqa'

NC1504212196 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2104 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in: According to our correspondent Israeli military aircraft a short while ago raided Munir Matta's home located on the southern approach to Sribbin in the western al- Biqa' valley near the Blue Lake tourist complex. According to initial reports, the owner of the home is underneath the debris. A child was wounded. Israeli warplanes are repeatedly flying over the area, hampering rescue work.

Lebanon: Government Radio Updates Military Operations in South

NC1604050496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0415 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Just in from the news desk: The Israeli attacks on Lebanon continued for the sixth day running. The Israeli forces' artillery this morning bombarded the villages of al- Mansurah, Majdal Zun, Mazra'at Biyut al-Siyyad, al-Hinniyah, al- 'Izziyah, al-Qulaylah, and others in the central and western sectors. [passage omitted]

The agents' radio [Kafr Killa Voice of the South] announced that the deadline for the departure of the residents of Tyre and some neighboring villages has been extended until 1000 [0700 GMT]. Meanwhile, several fast gunboats are cruising off the coast between Ra's al-Bayyadah and Sidon. The gunboats fired flares over the area.

Elsewhere, the agents [South Lebanese Army] are currently bombarding the villages of Shaqra, Bra'shit, Haddathah, and Haris. More than 50 percent of the houses there have been hit. At 0630 [0330 GMT], Israeli warplanes raided Mazra'at Mishrif. A formation of helicopters fired a number of air-to-surface missiles at Jabal al-'Arid near Qana.

Lebanon: Tyre Residents Warned To Leave by 0700 GMT 16 Apr

NC1604051696 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0448 GMT 16 Apr 96

[Communique No. 1 "for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Further to communique No. 11, which was broadcast this morning: The Israeli Army reminds any residents of Tyre who have not yet left the town that they should leave it by 1000 [0700 GMT]. Everyone remaining in Tyre and its suburbs after that hour will expose himself to danger at his own risk. He who forewarns is excused.

Lebanon: IAF Reports 'Accurate Strikes' in Raid on 'Ayn al-Hulwah

TA1604052196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Early this morning, Israel Air Force [IAF] assault helicopters attacked a building belonging to the 13th of Black September Organization, a Palestinian rejectionist group led by Munir Miqdah, in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah refugee camp near Sidon.

An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman reported that this organization cooperated with Hizballah in firing katyushas and in other terrorist attacks. The IAF pilots reported accurate strikes, and all our aircraft returned safely to base.

Our monitor Mikha'el Gurdus notes that Radio Free Lebanon reported that Miqdah's house had been hit and three people were injured, one seriously.

The IDF is calling on Sidon residents to stay away from the houses of people known to be activists belonging to Palestinian and Shiite terrorist organizations. The warning was broadcast a short while ago on the SLA [South Lebanese Army] radio. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Attack Sidon Camp, Casualties Reported

NC1604052396 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0436 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian sources this morning said that Israeli aircraft staged an air raid on the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp near Sidon early today. The raid targeted a building belonging to the 13 September Organization. Three people were injured in the air raid.

Just in from the news desk: Israeli helicopters attacked the headquarters of the 13 September terrorist organization this morning. This base is located in 'Ayn al-Hulwah in Sidon. This organization has carried out a

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number of terrorist operations in the past. The presence of terrorists, like Munir al-Maqdah and Khudur Salamah, in Sidon exposes its residents to danger. The town's residents should not allow any terrorist organizations, especially Hizballah and the 13 September Organization, to deploy near their homes.

If calm does not prevail in Israel, there will be no calm in Sidon or any other place in Lebanon.

Lebanon: Israeli Army Warns Residents Not To Return to South

NC1604054196 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0520 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible source in the Israeli Army has restated that all roads leading to the north are open and safe, unlike the roads leading to the south. Everyone trying to leave southward or to return to the villages which fall within the scope of the military operations, will expose himself to danger at his own risk.

Lebanon: Tyre Residents Begin Leaving for North

NC1604062996 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0558 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Citing their correspondents in the south, Western news agencies have reported that the residents who were still in Tyre this morning are now leaving the area and going north toward Sidon and Beirut ahead of the 1000 [0700 GMT] deadline set in the Israeli Army's communiques. The residents are so doing to avoid any danger resulting from the possible renewal of the Israeli military operations after that time.

Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Attack More Areas in South, West al-Biqa'

NC1604063896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0618 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondents in the south and Western al-Biqa' have reported that the villages and towns of Khirbat Silm, Bi'r al- Salasil, al-Suwwanah, al-Jumayjimah, Wadi al-Qaysiyah, Shaqra, Bra'shit, Qabrikha, Tulin, and Sadaf al-Battikh are currently coming under fierce artillery bombardment.

Israeli aircraft have carried out two air raids on Mashgharah. Aircraft have fired 18 air-to-surface missiles at the ridges of Mashgharah since 0830 [0530 GMT] today.

Lebanon: Islamic Resistance Statement Says All North Israel Targeted

NC1604060896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0230 GMT 16 Apr 96

[Telephone report by an unidentified correspondent in Beirut— recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Zionist missile-launching helicopters fired at several residential areas in southern Beirut on Monday [15 April] evening. One building was destroyed and several people were wounded.

Bombers from the regime occupying Jerusalem also attacked an electricity generator on the heights overlooking Beirut, as a result of which another sector of the Lebanese capital was plunged into darkness.

In southern Lebanon, Zionist bombers, helicopters, and heavy artillery shelled hospitals, and commercial, cultural, and historic centers and sites. In the worst of these attacks, more than 300 shells were fired at al-Nabatiyah, inflicting heavy casualties and damage.

With the continuation of these extensive onslaughts, the number of war refugees in Beirut and in other areas in Lebanon has increased, thus making relief operations more difficult. Also complicating relief operations is the maritime siege of Beirut and on other Lebanese coastal cities. Zionist warships are preventing ships carrying relief from approaching the coast.

Continuing its crushing reply of deterrence, the Hizballah revolutionary movement fired dozens of Katyushas at Zionist- inhabited areas in northern occupied Palestine on Monday. Hizballah forces also carried out operations in the occupied section of southern Lebanon and attacked Zionist centers and bases on the 'Abba, al-Zaffatah, and Burj axes.

An hour ago the Islamic Resistance issued a statement declaring the entire northern area of Palestine up to Golan the target of attacks by combatants.

Reporting for the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran from Beirut.

Lebanon: Israeli Warplanes Begin Attacks on Tyre

NC1604065796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0653 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: The Israeli warplanes are now raiding the township of Ma'rakah in Tyre.

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Lebanon: Israeli Warplanes Attack More Areas in Tyre

NC1604071096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0659 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Tyre has told us that Israeli warplanes have raided the areas [in Tyre] of Dayr Qanun al-Nahr and al- Hallusiyah. Meanwhile, the Israeli occupation forces continue to bombard southern villages and areas.

Lebanon: Israeli Warplanes Raid Tyre Areas, Overfly Sidon

NC1604074196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0712 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Tyre has just reported that the Israeli warplanes fired four missiles at the township of al-Jumayjimah a few moments ago, setting several houses on fire. Enemy aircraft also raided the area of al-Tabbalah between Khirbat Silm and Qallawiyah.

Elsewhere, the enemy aircraft are currently flying over the central sector and Sidon.

Lebanon: Radio Reports Further Israeli Air Raids on Tyre

NC1604072896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0706 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Tyre has just told us that Israeli warplanes raided the areas of Dirdghayya and Ma'rub in Tyre a short while ago. The Israeli air raid on Dayr Qanun al-Nahr left a house completely destroyed.

Lebanon: Israeli Warplanes Fly Sorties Over Ba'labakk

NC1604075996 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0748 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli warplanes have been flying over the city of Ba'labakk since 1020 [0720 GMT] today.

At 1010, the Israeli warplanes targeted Marj Haruf and then al- Jumayjimah at 1030.

The Israeli artillery bombardment of all the villages in the al- Nabatiyah area is continuing.

Lebanon: Communique on Israeli Army Warning Not To Travel Southward

NC1604073896 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0722 GMT 16 Apr 96

[Communique No. 2 "for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli Army announces the following to the esteemed citizens:

1. You can travel on roads leading to the north only;

2. It is absolutely inadmissible to go southward;

3. It is absolutely inadmissible to return to the villages that have been named in the communiques so far issued; and

4. Anyone violating these provisions will certainly expose himself to danger at his own risk.

Lebanon: Israelis Bomb al-Jumayjimah Building Housing 40 Refugees

NC1604080696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0744 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent has reported that an Israeli warplane has targeted a building in al- Jumayjimah where 40 persons had sought refuge. The extent of the casualties is not yet known due to the intensive Israeli bombardment that is preventing ambulances from reaching the town.

The enemy aircraft resumed raids on al-Jumayjimah at 1030 [0730 GMT], destroying several houses. They also raided the street near the Nur-al-Din petrol station in Bi'r al-Salasil, also destroying several houses there.

Lebanon: Israeli Artillery Bombards al-Nabatiyah Vicinity

NC1604082796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0806 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondents report that the areas of Hayy al-Saray, Hayy al-Masha', and Kafr al-Za'tar in al-Nabatiyah are currently coming under concentrated artillery fire. Fires broke out in two houses in Haruf. Enemy warplanes continue to fly over the areas.

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Lebanon: Israeli Planes Draw Antiaircraft Fire Over Beirut

NC1604090596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0849 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just learned that Israeli warplanes are flying over Beirut and the Southern Suburb, drawing antiaircraft from the Lebanese Army.

Lebanon: Government Radio on Israeli Air Raids, Artillery Shelling

NC1604090796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0845 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just been informed that the bombardment of Sribbin last night led to the martyrdom of citizen Munir Matta. His two sons were also wounded. We have just been told that at 1130 [0830 GMT] today the Israeli warplanes raided the village of Shaqra. They also raided Majdal Silm at 1125. The raids were accompanied by heavy and concentrated bombardment of Bi'r al- Salasil, Khirbat Silm, Majdal Silm, al-Sawwanah, Tulin, Qabrikha, Shaqra, and Bra'shit. In addition, Israeli aircraft conducted low- altitude flights over the villages of Ma'rub, Dirdghayya, Barish, Dayr Qanun al-Nahr, and Tura.

At 1130, Israeli aircraft raided Wadi al-Kufur. The outskirts of al-Nabatiyah, Jibshit, Haruf, and Kafr Rumman came under heavy artillery fire.

Lebanon: Report Fadlallah's House Hit by Israelis Denied

NC1604083496 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0818 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The press office of 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has denied that Fadlallah's house was hit by the Israeli attacks.

Lebanon: Israeli Warplanes Attack More Areas in al-Nabatiyah

NC1604094696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0927 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: A NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent has just reported that Israeli warplanes have staged three air raids on al-Numayriyah al-Sharqiyah in al- Nabatiyah. Meanwhile, Israeli artillery is still bombarding these areas.

Lebanon: More Israeli Attacks Reported; Helicopter Kills 2 in Tyre

NC1604093696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0912 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY [NNA] correspondent in al-Nabatiyah reports the villages of Zawtar al- Gharbiyah, Sir al-Gharbiyah, and 'Adhsit are now the target of enemy air raids. A Civil Defense vehicle was hit on the Haruf-Zibdin road.

Meanwhile, the Israeli bombardment is now targeting the area of Saydun, east of Sidon. The NNA correspondent also reports that the area of Wadi al-Kufur is now the target of Israeli artillery and that the heavy bombardment of Iqlim al-Tuffah continues, targeting 'Ayn Bu Siwar and the 'Ayn Qana-Sribba triangle. Enemy warplanes do continue to overfly the region.

The raid on Dayr Qanun al-Nahr completely destroyed 3 buildings, belonging to citizens Hasan 'Izz-al-Din, Muhammad 'Izz-al-Din, and Husayn 'Izz-al-Din. In Khirbat Silm enemy bombardment resulted in several houses in the village burning down.

Meanwhile, the villages of Majdal Shaqra, Bra'shit, and al- Jumayjimah are now coming under Israeli bombardment.

[In a related report, Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic at 0917 adds: "AFP has quoted Lebanese police in Tyre as saying that two Lebanese military personnel were killed this morning when their vehicle was hit by an antitank missile fired by an Israeli helicopter."]

Lebanon: Israel To Be Asked for Compensation for Losses

NC1604100896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0925 GMT 16 Apr 96

[Statement issued by office of Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has asked the Finance Ministry, the Development and Reconstruction Council, and the competent official departments to prepare a comprehensive report on the direct and indirect material losses caused by the Israeli aggression — in preparation for lodging a complaint against Israel with the UN Security Council and to demand that Israel pay compensation for these losses. Several Israeli officials have admitted that Israel is implementing a prepared plan for Lebanon the objective of which is to damage and destroy Lebanon's infrastructure, undermining the whole process of reconstruction and causing the collapse of the Lebanese Government's

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current efforts to reactivate the economy and carry out reconstruction in Lebanon.

A complete dossier is being prepared on the Israeli officials' statements, which revealed the aforementioned plan. The dossier will be included in the complaint to the UN Security Council.

Lebanon: Army Issues Communique on 16 Apr Attacks

NC1604101796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0946 GMT 16 Apr 96

[Communique Issued by the Guidance Department of the Lebanese Army on 16 April — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli warplanes, helicopters, and artillery of various calibers this morning continued their fierce bombardment of most villages in the western and central sectors, in addition to some towns in the al-Biqa' region.

Sergeant Ibrahim Farid al-Nashif and Private Jean Tanyus Bu- 'Assaf were martyred in the bombardment of al-Bazuriyah in Tyre Province.

The villages that came under air and land attack were: Tyre, Bi'r al-Salasil, al-Qulaylah, al-Bazuriyah, Hannawiyah, Haruf, Jibshit, Bra'shit, al-M'alliyah, Majdal Silm, Shaqra, Dayr Qanun al- Nahr, Tibnin, Khirbat Silm, al-Nabatiyah, Kafr Rumman, al-Kufur, Kafr Tibnit, 'Arab Salim, 'Ayn Bu Siwar, Jarju', Jba', Mashgharah, and Sribbin.

Meanwhile, the Army Command reminds citizens in Beirut and the suburbs not to travel unless necessary due to the constant warplane flights over the area and the continued presence of warships off the coast between al-Jiyyah and al-Sarafand.

Lebanon: Jibshit Raided; 4 Bodies Found in Bombed Refugee Shelter

NC1604102096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1003 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli enemy aircraft raided Jibshit at 1300 [1000 GMT] today.

Concerning the Israeli bombardment of al-Jumayjimah shelter, the NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent has reported that the bodies of four martyrs were taken to the Tibnin Hospital, of whom Fadil 'Atwah and Fatimah Hamzah have been identified. Six wounded were taken to the hospital, of whom Rammal Hamzah was identified.

Lebanon: Israeli Attack Kills 2 Lebanese Soldiers

NC1604102896 Paris AFP in English 0932 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Sidon, Lebanon, April 16 (AFP) — Helicopter gunships killed two Lebanese soldiers in a missile attack and blasted the home of a Palestinian militant leader on Tuesday [16 April] as Israel broadened its six-day onslaught on its neighbour.

The helicopters fired an anti-tank missile at a car driven by the soldiers in southern Lebanon, missed but then hit the abandoned house where they ran for cover, killing them instantly, police in Tyre said.

They were the first Lebanese troops to die in the Israel's operation to halt Hizballah rocketing of its northern border.

Meanwhile, in a broadening of the operation, helicopter gunships swept in from an Israeli warship and narrowly missed killing Munir al-Maqdah, a dissident from Yasir 'Arafat's main Fatah faction, in a dawn raid on his home in the country's biggest Palestinian camp of 'Ayn al-Hulwah.

Three anti-tank missiles slammed into the house at the camp in the southeastern suburbs of Sidon wounding four people, one seriously.

Al-Maqdah, who was sleeping downstairs in the building narrowly escaped unhurt, but his year-old son was among the injured.

He heads a small militant group called "Black September 13" — after the date the Israel-PLO autonomy accords were signed — which has claimed several anti-Israeli attacks in southern Lebanon and says it was preparing suicide bomb operations.

An Israeli army spokesman said aircraft attacked a headquarters of the Black September 13 group which "is involved in terrorist activities with Hizballah in southern Lebanon, has fired Katyusha rockets into Israel and perpetrated other attacks." [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Israeli Warplanes Attack More Areas in Tyre

NC1604071096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0659 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Tyre has told us that Israeli warplanes have raided the areas [in Tyre] of Dayr Qanun al-Nahr and al- Hallusiyah. Meanwhile, the Israeli occupation forces continue to bombard southern villages and areas.

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Lebanon: Israeli Warplanes Raid Tyre Areas, Overfly Sidon

NC1604074196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0712 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Tyre has just reported that the Israeli warplanes fired four missiles at the township of al-Jumayjimah a few moments ago, setting several houses on fire. Enemy aircraft also raided the area of al-Tabbalah between Khirbat Silm and Qallawiyah.

Elsewhere, the enemy aircraft are currently flying over the central sector and Sidon.

Lebanon: Continued Israeli Raids in South Reported

NC1604103796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1020 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent reports that Israeli enemy aircraft raided Khirbat Silm and Majdal Silm at 1310 [1010 GMT]. Meanwhile, the concentrated bombardment of Bi'r al-Salasil, al-Sawwanah, Tulin, Qabrikha, Khirbat Silm, and Majdal Silm continues.

Lebanon: More Katyushas Fired at Israeli Settlement

NC1604110796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1054 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent has reported that a new salvo of Katyusha rockets was fired at a settlement in northern occupied Palestine at 1340 [1040 GMT] today. The name of the settlement is not known.

The [Israeli] bombardment is now concentrating on Kafr Dunin, Dary Qintar, B'ir al-Salasil, and Khirbat Silm. Warplanes and helicopters are also flying over these areas.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Receives U.S. Proposal on Halting Israeli Attack

NC1604110896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1038 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has met in Jiddah with the U.S. consul who handed him a proposed U.S. solution to stop the Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

Prime Minister al-Hariri confirmed that he received the U.S. proposal to resolve the situation in Lebanon from the U.S. consul in Jiddah. He said that what the Security Council did about the Lebanese complaint is not enough and expressed surprise at the British stand on Lebanon. He stressed that military action against Lebanon will be fruitless, and will affect the peace process. He added that Lebanon is ready to guarantee security in the south if Israel withdraws from there.

Lebanon: Hizballah's Qasim on 'Right To Retaliate'

MM1604110496 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 15 Apr 96 p 3

[Interview with Shaykh Na'im Qasim, deputy secretary general of Hizballah, by Muhammad Shuqayr in Beirut; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Shuqayr] What is Hizballah's comment on Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq's remarks that the military operations will not stop unless the Lebanese Government disarms the [Hizballah] party?

[Qasim] Israel is the aggressor and Hizballah is carrying out the duty of resistance for the occupied territories. Israel must withdraw unconditionally. It is now in a dilemma, bogged down in the Lebanese quagmire. The demands Baraq is talking about are an illusion and an attempt to mislead, after falling into the Lebanese trap. Any confrontation between the government and the resistance and the people is completely out of the question because everyone is in agreement on the need for action to liberate the territory. It is the aggressor who should stop his aggression and leave the land.

[Shuqayr] Where will the military situation in the south lead?

[Qasim] What is happening in the south, western al-Biqa', and other Lebanese areas in the form of air, land, and sea attacks is aggression against civilians and peaceful villages in every sense. Any claims about confronting the resistance fighters or Hizballah are not supported by field evidence. The best proof of what we are saying is the Suhmur massacre of civilians and the ambulance massacre which claimed the lives of four children and wounded two others. All this indicates that the enemy is targeting civilians directly in order to put pressure on the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese people to cause internal confrontation, but that is completely out of the question because the people's solidarity with the resistance is very great and the resistance is most seriously defending its people by shelling settlements and setting them on fire, so that nobody in northern Palestine will be safe as long as the south and other Lebanese areas are the targets of Israeli shells and missiles.

[Shuqayr] How do you view the U.S. position?

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[Qasim] We support the Lebanese Government's call for a meeting of the UN Security Council despite our conviction that Washington will use its veto. It tried to prevent Lebanon from lodging a complaint with the threat of using the veto weapon, but, despite that, we believe that submitting the complaint and the U.S. use of its veto will further expose the U.S. position in support of the Israeli entity, a clear stance of partiality, thus gradually helping to disprove the claim of American neutrality in the region.

[Shuqayr] Where is the situation in the south heading?

[Qasim] We are fully prepared to face the Israeli aggression whatever its dimensions and however long it takes. Signs of Israel's dilemma began to appear on the horizon when they started talking about certain demands and urging American contacts with the parties. They changed the title of the battle, from hitting Hizballah and stopping the katyushas, to putting pressure on the government and on the civilians, and this means the start of the countdown for the Israeli designs behind this aggression. We do not know how long it will take, but the Israelis are under much pressure whereas we are not. In the coming two days the details will become clear and the size and continuation or stoppage of the aggression will also become clear. We will not accept any Israeli conditions. We are in a firm and strong defensive position and we believe that the scale of popular support, official solidarity, and the Syrian support are all elements which help Lebanon stand fast against this aggression. The Israeli cries, the settlers' screams, the exposure of the aggression against civilians to world public opinion through television pictures, and the dwindling of the means of pressure available to Israel — which has used everything possible so far and achieved nothing — are all helpful factors in the countdown which will not be in Israel's favor.

[Shuqayr] You spoke before of a "finger- biting" contest. What did you mean by that?

[Qasim] I meant that the purpose of any battle is to hurt the other side and force it to submit to a fait accompli. That is not to say that the Israelis are not under pressure, with katyushas falling on northern Israel. So the real battle is, who will scream first? I believe that they will because there is no reason for us to scream, because we have right on our side and we have popular support and are in the best state of preparedness for self-defense.

[Shuqayr] Are there any conditions for stopping the katyushas?

[Qasim] The katyusha firing by us is a reaction to the shelling of civilians and the shelling of villages. The [katyusha] firing was not the start but the Israelis used it as a pretext, not backed by facts, to take some action in the hope of boosting Peres' election prospects, with full American support. Nothing should be asked of the victim of aggression. What is required is that the aggressor should stop his aggression. The rockets fired on the settlements were the result not the cause. The cause was the killing of civilians and the shelling of peaceful villages. We have so far been saying that the civilian equation is: our civilians on the one hand against the civilians inside occupied Palestine on the other. It is a continuing equation. We might make greater demands if the aggression continued.

[Shuqayr] The party leaders talk about retaliation as if they have an advanced weapon they have not used before.

[Qasim] I have no comment. I will just say: everything at the appropriate time....

[Shuqayr] Is the aim of what is happening to strengthen Peres' election prospects?

[Qasim] I believe that the main point is Peres' position in the elections, because it is accepted that the negotiations cannot move forward in the month and a half before the Israeli elections. What was complex for years cannot be resolved in such a period of time. Therefore, the Israeli action is an electioneering action. The Israeli aggression against Lebanon complements the Israeli-Turkish agreement moves, the openness by some Gulf states to Israel, Jordan's submission to Israeli terms, and 'Arafat's abominable capitulation to Peres' demands. All these factors are interlinked and, in the view of the Americans and the Israelis, combine to improve Peres' election chances.

We believe, however, that the results of the past four days of aggression will be a real mark of shame and will not serve Peres or the Israeli designs in the region.

[Shuqayr] From what the party leaders are saying, one understands that you have in mind an unconventional retaliation if the aggression continued.

[Qasim] If the battles and the acts of aggression continue, we will continue to defend and confront them with all means in our possession. Others are also called upon to do their duty. I believe that we are sufficiently strong to stand fast. The embarrassment is on the Israeli side.... Let it be known that we have a right to retaliate anywhere in occupied Palestine. There is nothing to prevent us from doing that.... As to how the retaliation will happen and with what weapon, we keep that to ourselves. We are not in the habit of declaring positions without action.

[Shuqayr] Is the July agreement finished?

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[Qasim] What has now happened is that Israel has violated the July understanding, but the question is, can they amend it? Our view is that they cannot amend it on their own terms. If there is going to be any amendment it would certainly be in favor of the victor. We believe that the resistance and its people are the victors.

[Shuqayr] Do you believe that the internal atmosphere in Lebanon is one of full sympathy with the Islamic resistance? How do you interpret the silence of some people so far?

[Qasim] It is clear that the internal atmosphere is one of sympathy with the resistance and condemnation of the Israeli aggression, because it has been exposed. Supportive stands by some people have more significance than silence, but some people's silence is tantamount to support which might later be expressed in declared positions. At this point we would like all views, feelings, and sentiments to be united against the aggression in any way. We do not wish any problems to be raised at the internal level lest attention be diverted from the main cause which is confrontation of the occupation and liberation of the territory.

[Shuqayr] Again we ask about the other weapon for confrontation.

[Qasim] We prefer expressions to be practical. We do not wish to talk about military or internal matters. We let time and facts reveal what we have in mind.

[Shuqayr] Israel talks about confronting the party but so far there has been no such confrontation. Why not?

[Qasim] The main reason for the absence of direct Israeli confrontation with the party is the Israelis' inability to deal painful blows to party targets or to hit Hizballah leaders or elements. If we talk about wishes, the Israelis certainly would like to hit the party. That is a declared objective of theirs and they have made every effort to fulfill it to enhance their credibility but they have discovered that the information provided by their intelligence and their informers and all their military capabilities have failed to harm the resistance fighters or undermine the party's capabilities, however small.

It is a question of Israeli failure not Israeli wishes. When they failed, (Foreign Minister Ehud) Baraq yesterday tried to raise a new slogan for his aggression campaign in Lebanon, that of putting pressure on the government to put pressure on Hizballah. That was different from the slogan of the first day which was to hit the party and stop the katyushas. That means political retreat linked to the Israeli Army's field failure which the Israeli Government discovered after hearing the practical results of the aggression.

Lebanon: Israeli Air Raids Hit Beirut's Southern Suburb

NC1604113496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1121 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli warplanes are now flying over Beirut, specifically over the Southern Suburb, drawing antiaircraft fire.

Lebanon: Israeli Helicopters Attack Periphery of Beirut Airport

NC1604113596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1123 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the newsdesk: Israeli helicopters are staging air raids on the periphery of the [Beirut] Airport.

Lebanon: Buwayz Receives U.S. Initiative; Response 'This Afternoon'

NC1604113696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1122 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones has handed Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz a message from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher containing the U.S. initiative resulting from contacts being held by the U.S. Administration with Lebanon, Syria, and Israel.

Minister Buwayz conveyed the initiative to the president, the prime minister, and the Chamber of Deputies speaker. He sent his adviser, Ilyas Haddad, to inform the speaker of it.

A diplomatic source said Lebanon will respond to the initiative this afternoon.

Lebanon: Further Report on Israeli Air Raids

NC1604115596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1138 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Two Israeli helicopters raided the airport periphery at 1425 [1125 GMT], drawing antiaircraft fire. Meanwhile, Israeli warplanes fired several missiles at al-Sultaniyah.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Views U.S. Offer, British Stance

NC1604120396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1040 GMT 16 Apr 96

[News conference by Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri with unidentified correspondents in Jeddah on 16 April—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] Prime Minister: There is information that the United States has made an

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offer to Israel, Syria, and Lebanon. What do you think of this?

[Al-Hariri] Actually, the U.S. ambassador informed me of an offer yesterday after a contact with Robert Pelletreau. Some U.S. officials at the embassy here handed me the offer today. I have looked at it and given it a quick reading. From this quick glance, I would say it is difficult for us to accept.

[Correspondent] What is this offer?

[Al-Hariri] It is still under discussion. Naturally, I must discuss it with his excellency the president and, maybe, the (?Cabinet). But the first impression is that it is an offer that is a bit difficult for us to accept as it is.

[Correspondent] Does it specify Christopher's stance that....

[Al-Hariri, interrupting] I do not want to get into details. But my first impression is that it is difficult for us to accept it the way it was relayed.

[Correspondent] The British defense secretary, who is in Israel, yesterday justified the Israeli aggression. For now, Britain will send an envoy to Lebanon. What is your comment on this?

[Al-Hariri] If it wants to send an envoy to Lebanon, it is welcome. There is also a possibility that I might go to London soon, in the days to come. The British delegate's stance at the Security Council yesterday was also a departure from what we have been accustomed to seeing from British diplomacy in the past few years. That was really a surprise for us. We did not expect Britain to adopt such positions, because Britain knows the situation very well and is a friendly state. But I hope that in our trip to England we will sit down with officials, discuss the issue, and clarify things. I believe that in practice they have always recognized and called for the implementation of Resolution 425. They know Lebanon is a peaceful country that seeks peace and security. We hope this stance does not reflect the position of the British Government [words indistinct].

[Correspondent] You talk much about the July 1993 understanding. Meanwhile...

[Al-Hariri, interrupting] No, I do not talk much. I know Israel is saying the understanding has gone with the wind, like the movie. Hizballah is also saying it is no longer adequate. We believe that military action, in general, will bring about no results. I have said that from the day the military operations started. Military action leads nowhere; it has been tried before. Israel has been trying it since 1978. Where did it lead it? Nowhere. More destruction. The security of the settlements in Northern Israel has not been guaranteed; Israeli citizens in Northern Israel continue to sleep in shelters every now and then; and people are getting killed and wounded there. Lebanon is paying a heavy price for this. If a person has been trying something out for 18 years without success, has not the time come for him to try something else?

The July agreement was reached as a temporary arrangement so that we could achieve results. It was an agreement to halt the fighting under an understanding called the July agreement, which was not supposed to last long before the whole issue would be resolved. Things dragged on because of the negotiations and many other things. Now the fighting has erupted again, in part because Israel did not comply with the July agreement. Perhaps Hizballah too violated it occasionally. So both sides have violated the agreement. Now, when I proposed yesterday a return to the July agreement, it was not because I am convinced that the July agreement is the solution; the July agreement is not the solution. The solution is to implement Resolution 425 and Israel's withdrawal from the occupied south. The Lebanese Army, along with the Lebanese security forces, can provide security in that region. Thus, if what Israel is saying is true— that it is occupying the south to guarantee security in Northern Israel—the Lebanese State, the president, myself, and everybody else is saying that the Lebanese Government is prepared to provide this security. Thus, there is no justification for the occupation, unless it [Israel] has other intentions. If it wants to guarantee security, it has no alternative, and we have no alternative, but to implement Resolution 425, which calls for Israel's withdrawal from the occupied south. Then security will prevail. As for peace, we are also ready for it. If Israel reaches a peace agreement with Syria and with the rest of the Arab countries, we are part of this nation. Consequently, we are ready for it [peace], believe in it, are convinced of it, and consider it a basic part of our strategy.

[Correspondent] But this is in the very long run. What about in the short run?

[Al-Hariri] In the very short run, undoubtedly, the fighting must stop immediately, because there can be no solution while the fighting goes on. There can be no solution.

[Correspondent] But it seems there is intransigence on the part of Israel and Hizballah [words indistinct].

[Al-Hariri] Today Israel is striking at Lebanon, not Hizballah. Look for yourself at what has happened to Hizballah. We have said that these operations will strengthen Hizballah. It is as if Israel has been assigned to strengthen Hizballah. So far nothing has happened to Hizballah. Neither its bases nor its weapons have

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been hit. It continues to fire Katyushas at Northern Israel. Security in Northern Israel is still not guaranteed. Only one thing has happened: The Lebanese people are paying the price of this policy that Israel is pursuing. It is striking at the infrastructure. They hit one power plant then another. They are displacing people. Every hour I hear reports that they are threatening to evacuate an entire city. So who has suffered? What is happening? Is this the way they are solving the problem of Hizballah. I have said before that if Israel or anybody else considers Hizballah to be a problem, the dispute is about how to solve this problem. Israel says [the solution lies in] using more violence and destruction. They have been doing that for the past five or six days. What have they accomplished? Hizballah remains in place. Its bases, leaders, and cadres have not been hit and its weapons have not been destroyed. It continues to fire Katyushas at northern Israel.

So the solution cannot be a military one. It should be political. A political solution dictates resorting to reason, refraining from killing innocent people, women and children, displacing people, and demolishing homes and villages, and implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy.

Israel does not want to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy. We have never claimed that Lebanon was stronger than Israel and that Israel could not destroy Lebanon. We know full well that Israel can destroy Lebanon. They have embarked on destroying the infrastructure.

No one is saying Israel is unable to strike at Lebanon, displace the Lebanese people, and kill women, children, and elderly people. It can and it is proceeding with this process. If Israel's goal is to destroy Lebanon, it is proceeding along this course. If Israel's goal is to strike Hizballah, it is clear that Israel has not produced the expected result. We said the Hizballah issue cannot be resolved in this way. It can be resolved by Israel withdrawing from south Lebanon and leaving this issue for the Lebanese State so that it can ...

[Correspondent, interrupting] Hizballah now considers that it is getting political and popular support and that even the State is adopting it. What do you think of this?

[Al-Hariri] This supports what we have said, namely, Israel's actions are strengthening, not weakening, Hizballah.

[Correspondent] Israeli radio reported yesterday that there was an Israeli commitment to withdrawing from [words indistinct] nine months if the Lebanese Army disarms Hizballah. What do you say to that?

[Al-Hariri] The Israelis say different things all the time. Once, that is, now, they say nine months. Before that they said six months. Before that three months. They are all trying to circumvent the implementation of Resolution 425. Resolution 425 calls for Israel's unconditional withdrawal from south Lebanon and stipulates that the Lebanese State and the Lebanese Army and security forces take the responsibility.

Their words—Disarm Hizballah and we will withdraw nine months later—is all a maneuver around the implementation of Resolution 425. They do not want to implement Resolution 425. If it is security they want, I say before you and before the whole world that we are ready to guarantee security in the south if Israel pulls out of south Lebanon.

[Correspondent] [words indistinct] French diplomacy. [Words indistinct] what was the outcome? Will it succeed, especially now that the French stand appears to have been abandoned? At first there was a call for a cease-fire. Now there is a call for calm.

[Al-Hariri] No, the French stance is unchanged...

[Correspondent, interrupting] [Words indistinct] clashed with Israeli obstacles.

[Al-Hariri] Maybe, maybe. The attempt may or may not succeed. No doubt France is exerting efforts; it is supporting Lebanon. The French president's stance is clear. He demanded an immediate cease- fire and the implementation of Resolution 425. In the immediate short term there should be a return to the July [1993] understanding if this will halt the fire. Afterward we will proceed toward implementing Resolution 425 and achieving Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Lebanese territory.

France's stance is clear and as supportive of peace as ours. We support peace. What Peres is doing now goes against the peace process under the slogan of peace. Can anyone imagine that after all the continuous destruction Lebanon will go along with the peace process? What government would? They are destroying and displacing the people and killing children, women, and elderly people and destroying the infrastructure.

What will we tell our people tomorrow if Israel comes and says: We want to make peace? What will we say to our people? Will we tell them: They are the ones who destroyed and killed you, come and make peace with them? On what basis would we do that?

There is public opinion. This cannot happen. What Peres is doing is against the peace process.

[Correspondent] Compensating for the losses, especially those resulting from ...

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[Al-Hariri, interrupting] Today I spoke with the minister of finance, Minister Sanyurah, and chairman of the Board of Development and Reconstruction. I asked them to prepare a file to ask Israel for compensation for the direct and indirect damage inflicted by the Israeli operations on the Lebanese State and people. We will make this demand at the United Nations. No one [word indistinct] this issue. We know our rights and know what is for us and what is against us. The Lebanese State will pursue this issue in every international circle.

[Correspondent] What do you think about what has been issued by the Security Council regarding Lebanon's complaint?

[Al-Hariri] It is not enough. So we will pursue our attempt to obtain a condemnation of the Israeli acts of aggression. A demand to compensate Lebanon for all the damage caused by the latest direct and indirect Israeli operations will be added to the Lebanese complaint.

[Correspondent] Prime Minister, what do you say to the Lebanese people after your tour?

[Al-Hariri] I would like to emphasize that Lebanon and the Lebanese people have friends worldwide. I have seen no official who does not understand Lebanon's situation or who is unaware that Israel is attacking us, unaware that Israel must withdraw from Lebanon, and unaware that if there is no peace there should at least be security. If security is to be achieved, the only way is through Israel's withdrawal. The solution is not military, but political.

Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Attack al-Qulaylah Near Tyre

NC1604122496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1205 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At 1455 [1155 GMT], Israeli warplanes attacked residential quarters in al-Qulaylah, south of Tyre.

Lebanon: Radio Warns Citizens Away From Hizballah Centers

NC1604122796 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1158 GMT 16 Apr 96

[Communique No. 3 for "today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Referring to reports carried by the Lebanese media on the injury of some citizens who happened to be in the vicinity of Hizballah bases and centers, and in addition to earlier warnings, the Israel army once again warns and calls on all citizens to kindly stay clear of the bases, centers, offices, and installations of Hizballah and the other terrorist organizations. Whoever is present in the vicinity of these places will certainly put his life in danger. He will be doing that at his personal responsibility. He who forewarns is excused.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Leaves Morocco for Saudi Arabia

NC1504203296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the editors desk: Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has left Morocco for Jeddah. He will meet with senior Saudi officials tomorrow before he returns to Beirut. It is to be recalled that Morocco was the third leg of a tour that included Cairo and Paris. Al-Hariri has met with Moroccan King Hassan in the Royal Palace in Fes and discussed the situation in Lebanon, notably the Israeli aggression.

Lebanon: Italian Ambassador on Hizballah, Iran, Current Fighting

BR1604072096 Rome L'UNITA in Italian 14 Apr 96 p 15

[Interview with Carlo Calia, Italian amassader to Lebanon, by Umberto De Giovannangeli; place and date not given: "Italian Ambassador Calia: 'Beirut, Wounded by War, Knows How To Live With Bombs'" — first paragraph is L'UNITA introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] "After 17 years of clashes, Beirut has learned to live with war. Despite the Israeli raids, social and civic life goes on. People know when to go out to buy food and when to stop indoors. The greatest agitation is to be seen in political circles. All the Lebanese leaders are wondering at the moment how far the Israeli military operation will go. And they have not found an answer to date," Carlo Calia, Italian ambassador in Beirut, maintained.

[De Giovannangeli] What is life like in a city constantly suffering Israeli air raids?

[Calia] Seventeen years of civil war have trained the public to live with weapons and death. The streets are crowded and the markets are full of people. The city is trying to keep calm, and for the time being it is succeeding. The greatest agitation is to be seen in political and institutional circles. All the Lebanese leaders are wondering how far the Israelis intend to go. Of course, the scale of the Israeli military operation is vast, vast enough to arouse the suspicion in Beirut that one of Tel Aviv's aims is to cause trouble for Rafiq al-Hariri's government, which is regarded as too limp-wristed as far as Hizballah is concerned.

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[De Giovannangeli] How deep do the roots of the "Party of God" actually go?

[Calia] The perception of Israel that we have in Europe is different from that held by the Arab world bordering on the Jewish State. In Lebanon, even those who are light years away from the position held by the Shiite fundamentalists give Hizballah some credit, which derives from its very resistance to the Israeli occupier. It has to be borne in mind that the external threat is bringing the various Lebanese components together under a nationalistic flag, and Israel is unanimously regarded as a serious external threat to national integrity. In other words, Hizballah is not perceived as a terrorist movement, not least because, until a short time ago, the Shiite fundamentalists favored acts of guerrilla warfare over the indiscriminate terrorism practised by Hamas or the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. A deal was struck with Israel in 1993 on the scope of military operations, which were on no account to involve civilians. That deal has gone by the board now. Of course, even now Israel is trying to keep Lebanese civilian casualties to the minimum, but the very scope of the operation now under way casts doubt on such intentions.

[De Giovannangeli] Israel and the United States are accusing Iran of being Hizballah's major sponsor.

[Calia] It is a fact which, moreover, Tehran and the leaders of Hizballah themselves have never denied. What is new, however, is the intensity and scope of the help provided. Over the last year, the Shiite guerrillas have achieved an alarming advance in their military capabilities, and I do not only mean in terms of the weapons available to them. It is their level of training and internal disciple that has been raised, and this makes them even more dangerous.

[De Giovannangeli] Diplomacy seems to be marking time in this dramatic situation. On what basis can the negotiations be restarted?

[Calia] First of all by exerting pressure on all the parties to persuade them to cease military operations in the conviction, as the European Union statement stresses heavily, that violence only helps the enemies of peace. In the longer term, United Nations Resolution 425, which calls on Israel to withdraw from southern Lebanon, must be fully implemented. This need is felt with particular force by the EU, less so by the United States.

[De Giovannangeli] What is Lebanon today?

[Calia] Those who refer to a "Syrian protectorate" commit a serious error of simplification. In the Middle Eastern Arab world, post-civil-war Lebanon is first and foremost a unique model of peaceful cohabitation between various religious components, which is reflected in every sphere of civic and institutional life. The West has everything to gain from preserving Lebanon's pluralist identity. An independent Lebanon represents a major bridge between Europe and the rest of the Arab world, which is another reason why the military escalation must be stopped.

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Syria: French Foreign Minister Arrives in Damascus

JN1604094896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0915 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette arrived in Damascus this morning on a visit to Syria. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Foreign Ministry senior officials, and the French ambassador in Damascus and embassy staff were present at Damascus International Airport to welcome him.

Syria: France's de Charette, al-Shar' Comment on Conflict in Lebanon

JN1604123796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette arrived in Damascus this morning on a visit to Syria.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Foreign Ministry ranking officials, and the French ambassador in Damascus and embassy staff were present at Damascus International Airport to welcome him.

In statements to the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, Herve de Charette said: I came here to carry out the mission President Jacques Chirac tasked me with. First of all, it is a fact-finding mission. At the same time, I will seek a way to end the conflict in southern Lebanon.

De Charette added: I cannot but note now that the situation is difficult, we see no signs of improvement on the horizon, and the tribulation imposed on the inhabitants continues. Therefore, I have to work more in the coming hours and days. He said: My visit to Syria is very important. I largely depend on this visit to further clarify matters.

In reply to questions by those accompanying de Charette, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' said: I welcome French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette's visit. We are happy with the visit. We will cooperate to render his mission a success. Al-Shar' added: As de Charette said, the situation in southern Lebanon and all of Lebanon in light of the Israeli attacks and the ongoing Israeli shelling is a painful and difficult situation. It shows once again that Israel does not heed Arab or international public opinion. Of course, it ignores international law and UN resolutions.

Al-Shar' said that there should be a cease-fire and the Israeli attacks should stop, particularly since this harms civilians and economic facilities in Lebanon. Al-Shar' said he hopes international and French efforts would bring about a cease-fire and revive the July [1993] understanding.

Syria: France's de Charette Pessimistic About Cease-Fire in Lebanon

JN1604135596 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 Apr 96

[Report by Thana' al-Imam in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette expressed pessimism about the possibility of achieving a cease-fire in Lebanon. On arrival in Damascus, de Charette said he does not see any signs of improvement in the situation. He regretted the suffering caused to civilians. While asserting that his visit is of an exploratory nature, he stressed the extreme importance of the visit, which was assigned to him by Chirac. During the visit, he will discuss the possibility of finding a way out of the current conflict in southern Lebanon and northern Israel.

In the first Syrian official reaction, Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' stressed that a cease-fire must be secured and that Israeli attacks on Lebanon must stop. He refered to the need to return to the July understanding, which Syria is doing its utmost to revive.

De Charette's visit to Syria coincides with an Iranian Foreign Ministry delegation's visit under Khansari and with rumors about a joint French-Iranian initiative, which was later denied by French diplomatic sources in Damascus. The sources stated that they are unaware of any bilateral meeting between de Charette and Khansari in Damascus or a tripartite meeting among de Charette, Khansari, and al-Shar'. They indicated that it is natural for Iran to send a delegation to Syria to discuss ways of dealing with the difficult situation in Lebanon.

Khansari arrived in Damascus yesterday, leading an Iranian Foreign Ministry delegation including the Imam Supply Committee from the Iranian Red Crescent Society. The committee will send aid to Lebanon. The Iranian sources stressed that Khansari will discuss with the Syrian officials he will meet today the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the Iranian aid to the Lebanese people. The Iranian sources also denied the possibility of Velayati's arrival in Damascus. They said that the Iranian foreign minister is not scheduled to visit Syria at present.

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Syria: Defense Minister Talas Comments on Israel's 'Crazy War'

JN1604062696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, paid tribute to the steadfastness of the sons of our Arab people in Lebanon in the face of the Israeli attacks and the crazy war launched by the Israeli military machine.

Gen. Talas said this during a lecture he delivered yesterday evening on the impact of international developments on the Arab nation. The lecture came at the conclusion of the first cultural week organized by the History Department at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Damascus University. In his lecture, Gen. Talas said: The senseless war launched by the Israeli military machine against our brothers in Lebanon reflects Israel's aggressive psyche. The war also shows that this Israeli entity, which is alien to the Arab nation, does not want peace. This entity wants to subjugate and humiliate the Arab nation and plunder its resources. Gen. Talas said what Israel is doing against Lebanon is meant to strike at the peace process and undermine security and stability in the region.

Gen. Talas reviewed in detail the latest developments in the Arab and international arenas and Syria's national and pan-Arab positions in defense of the Arabs' just causes and legitimate rights. He also spoke about Syria's opposition to all attempts and schemes that seek to dismember and weaken the Arabs. Gen. Talas said that since the October liberation war — which was a watershed in the history of the Arab nation — colonialist powers have intensified their schemes to divide the Arabs, prevent their unity, and keep them busy with marginal wars and conflicts. The purpose of this is to control the Arabs and their resources.

Syria: Higher Committee Supporting Lebanon Issues Statement

JN1604073296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Higher Popular Committee in the Syrian Arab Republic for the support of the steadfastness of the fraternal Lebanese people issued the following statement:

Brother citizens, Arab strugglers everywhere: For several days, fraternal Lebanon has come under an ugly, brutal Israeli aggression. The terrorist Israeli Army is destroying homes, killing children, women, and old people, and displacing hundreds of thousands of people in a practice of organized state terrorism.

Our people in Syria, who share with their brothers in Lebanon their concerns and destiny, today declare their firm support for the kinsmen in Lebanon in general, and in the steadfast south in particular. Our people stress their full support for bolstering the steadfastness of fraternal Lebanon in its courageous stance in defense of land and dignity, stemming from the historical bonds between the one Arab people in the two fraternal countries. These genuine bonds have been strengthened since the dawn of the glorious Corrective Movement, led by President Hafiz al-Asad. The Syrian-Lebanese coalescence was clear on all national and pan-Arab occasions and positions.

The barbaric, brutal aggression which is showing its racist grudges toward the sons of our people in Lebanon these days confirms a number of facts. First, Israel has never believed in a just and comprehensive peace. This has been true since the convening of the Madrid conference and until the convening of the Sharm al-Shaykh conference. Israel is practicing deception in this context. Second, this aggression against Lebanon, in its terrible atrocities and unprecedented ugliness and use of scorched earth policy in the south, confirms the expansionist intentions of the Zionist entity and creates social and economic crises in Lebanon. The Zionist entity is repeating its unsuccessful policy to subdue Lebanon and its national resistance. This policy was defeated in the 1978 aggression, the 1982 invasion, and the collapse of the agreement of submission on 17 May 1983. Third, this aggression is a challenge to world public opinion and international legitimacy. The aggression also obstructs Europe's role, which calls for the implementation of Resolution 425 stipulating Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon and western al-Biqa'. Fourth, the conferences held and agreements signed in the region encouraged Israel to carry out this brutal aggression. Fifth, this savage aggression, which was condoned by the United States, the sponsor of the peace process, will destroy the very foundations of the peace process. This requires that the United States do something to stop this aggression and save the peace process before it is too late. Sixth, this odious aggression is meant to give an election boost to Shim'on Peres in the wake of the Sharm al-Shaykh conference. Israel, along with those who encourage it and provide a cover for its actions and those who are rushing to deal with it, are responsible for this aggression, because Israel has not changed its aggressive nature or stopped its attacks on Arab citizens.

Brother citizens: Our Syrian Arab people, who stand with all their resources by the side of the brothers in steadfast Lebanon and its heroic south, will not fail to support the Lebanese people to bolster their just and

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honorable position and enhance their steadfastness to face the treacherous Israeli aggression and liberate their land.

The Higher Popular Committee in the Syrian Arab Republic comprises all political forces, popular and professional organizations, and spiritual, economic, social, and cultural figures who embody national unity in Arab Syria. This committee, whose duty is to adopt appropriate measures to provide moral and material support for fraternal Lebanon, appeals to the Syrian Arab people, the Arab and Islamic nations, and the world public to stand by the Lebanese people, condemn the Israeli aggression, work to halt it, and ask Israel to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories in Lebanon and the Golan to the 4 June 1967 border. The committee is confident that victory will be the lot of our people in their just struggle to liberate their land and restore their usurped rights.

Struggle greetings to the fraternal Lebanese people and their valiant national resistance. Immortality to the martyrs of Lebanon and the Arab nation, who are the noblest of all people.

[Dated] Damascus, 15 April 1996

Syria: ASBP Regional Command Forms Committee in Support of Lebanon

JN1504180896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Regional Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP] formed a Higher Popular Committee [HPC] in the Syrian Arab Republic to bolster the fraternal Lebanese people's steadfastness in the face of the Israeli aggression and to extend financial and material aid to these heroic people, who are being exposed to the most dangerous, heinous, and barbaric aggression. This aggression has resulted in immense dangers and catastrophes for Lebanese citizens, their property, and installations in cities, villages, and rural areas, particularly in southern Lebanon and western al-Biqa'.

The committee includes the ASBP, the National Progressive Front [NPF] parties, popular organizations, trade unions, chambers of industry and commerce, contractors, and representatives of the economic, commercial, industrial, and spiritual institutions.

The committee held its first meeting under ASBP Assistant Secretary General Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar today. The committee approved the following:

1. The formation of central committees in all Syrian governorates under the chairmanship of the governor and the membership of the functionaries included in the HPC.

2. The formation of a financial committee under the chairmanship of ASBP Regional Command member Comrade Walid Hamdun, whose will formulate the appropriate plans to collect donations.

3. The formation of an information committee under the chairmanship of ASBP Regional Command member Dr. Tawfiq Salihah, whose will formulate a plan to explain the HPC tasks.

4. The formation of committees in every popular, vocational, industrial, or women's sector in every governorate. These committee will be affiliated with the HPC to collect money and material donations in accordance with the method approved by the financial committee.

5. The formation of committees in residential quarters in the cities affiliated with the governorate's committee.

6. The formation of regional committees affiliated with the governorates' committees. These committees will supervise the formation of committees in smaller cities, towns, and villages in order to collect donations in accordance with the method approved by the governorate committee.

The HPC entrusted its chairman with the task of following up the implementation of its resolutions, as well as the work of the various committees at all levels. The HPC also decided to issue a statement to the Syrian people to explain what the Lebanese are being exposed to and the HPC's popular and mass action to bolster the steadfastness of these heroic people, affirm Syria's cohesion with them, and extend aid to them.

Syria: Daily—Israeli Attack 'Challenge' to France's Chirac

JN1304121796 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0730 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 13 Apr (SANA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has denounced the Israeli aggression against Lebanon—an aggression which did not spare children, women, and the elderly, or their homes. The paper said that this is a spiteful escalation which is aimed against everything in Lebanon and launched on the trivial and despicable pretext of fighting the Lebanese resistance, which is defending its people, land, children, and homes.

In an editorial by its chief editor 'Amid al-Khuli today, AL-THAWRAH said that Israel's actions are by all standards a spiraling escalation of death and destruction and a vicious circle which makes action and reaction a never-ending process. AL-THAWRAH said that the past

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years should have been sufficient proof of this but Israel seems to be intending to send a number of messages, which are in fact well read and well understood.

The first message is that the Peres government is no less sanguinary or hawkish and extremist than the Likud opposition. Indeed, this government is appeasing this opposition by this mad and bloody escalation against Lebanon, making the killing of the Lebanese people at Israel's hands an election game by which it tries to beat the Likud.

AL-THAWRAH added that the elections have in effect become Peres' basic objective and the slogan of peace has retreated with every Israeli shell, missile, or salvo against Lebanon. The paper asked: Where is the "Peace Is More Important Than Elections" slogan which brought Peres to power? Are Peres' actions in Lebanon commensurate with this statement or should we say goodbye to peace after the Sharm al-Shaykh summit, one of whose applications is the Israeli arrogance?

AL-THAWRAH said: Perhaps one of the clear aims of the Israeli aggression is that Israel wants to challenge French President Jacques Chirac right after his visit to Lebanon and his well-known statements about peace, withdrawal, and Resolution 425. The moment Chirac returned home, Israel ordered its army to move against Lebanon.

AL-THAWRAH added: This is a clear message of challenge to Chirac and France and the pledges Chirac made. This means that Israel rejects all that Chirac wants and rejects any French or European role in the region's issues, particularly those related to peace.

AL-THAWRAH asked: Does Israel think that its methods will break the Syrian-Lebanese connection and joint destiny which the aggression is aimed against? Does Israel think that such a method could affect the relations of destiny binding the two brotherly people in Lebanon and Syria, thus forcing them to ease or compromise their declared and obvious peace terms? Does Israel believe that Syria and Lebanon could submit to terrorism, pressure, or aggression?

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH called for a large-scale Arab and international move to denounce and confront the aggression and to deter this Israeli arrogance. It said that Europe, and France in particular, as well as the United States—which is the main sponsor of the peace process—should all act quickly to end this Israeli onslaught against the peace-loving Lebanese people and stop the aggression which contravenes the simplest international laws and conventions. They must denounce these practices, prevent their recurrence, and make Israel understand that the one and only solution is a just and comprehensive peace which can be realized by comprehensive withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the Golan. The paper also asked Europe and the United States to bring Israel to the negotiations table before the peace process enters a dead-end channel.

Syria: 'Responsible' U.S. Stand on Lebanon Attacks Urged

JN1404151796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1145 GMT 14 Apr 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Western political quarters — even before Arab ones — were surprised by the U.S. Administration's stand on the brutal, large-scale aggression that has been continuing against Lebanon for three days. With the United States emerging as the sole superpower since the collapse of the Soviet Union, this administration has, in one way or another, usually tried to indicate its objectivity, impartiality, and global responsibility.

As close observers, we in the region believe that the present U.S. stand not only misses the truth, but also lacks the credibility that is supposed to be enjoyed by a superpower that has taken it upon itself to foster world peace and resolve world disputes responsibly, objectively, and fairly, as U.S. officials have often said.

While some quarters have expressed surprise at the extent of the U.S. Administration's bias, other quarters have denounced and condemned it. No country in the world has praised this stand — except for Israel, which is carrying out acts of flagrant aggression against civilians, children, and women on the pretext of pursuing Lebanese national resistance members. This aggression is taking place before the eyes of the U.S. Administration and with its consent — and even its blessing and support.

Irrespective of the U.S. Administration's stand, Israel's objective, and the official Arab stand, which is trapped between what some individuals want and what the Arab masses want, the logic of resistance necessarily imposes itself on Arab and world public opinion, which rejects occupation and justifies using all possible means to fight it. There is no alternative to full withdrawal from the occupied territory and compliance with the international legitimacy and its resolutions — not the law of the jungle, which currently prevails in southern Lebanon.

If the U.S. Administration views its election requirements through the eyes of the Zionist lobby and Israeli interests, then that is its own business. This will come, however, at the expense of its global role and its role as a fair, objective broker and honest sponsor. This will

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also reflect on the ability of the United States to maintain its role in the region and to live up to its responsibilities toward current world disputes and ones that might break out in the future, as long as the current balances are defective.

To contain the current explosion, remove the aggression, and control developments, which are liable to escalate in all directions, Israel must withdraw from the south and must be held responsible for its systematic state terrorism in Lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territory. This is the only thing that will curb the terrorism, which has serious repercussions for the region and the world, as the U.S. Administration knows.

The United States should take a responsible stand to spare the most important region in the world from real danger. This danger will be difficult to contain if the flagrant Israeli aggression continues and if the U.S. role remains biased.

Syria: Commentary Questions U.S. 'Credibility,'

JN1504152596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1148 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Israel continued its brutal aggression against Lebanon for the fifth consecutive day. It poured its bombs on Lebanese cities and villages from the air, the land, and the sea, showering residential quarters with lava and fire from all kinds of weapons; destroying houses, property, and public facilities; and killing scores of innocent citizens and wounding hundreds, most of whom are women, children, and the elderly.

Despite world condemnation of its actions, Israel has escalated its aggression from one day to the next to strike many positions deep inside Lebanon, caring less about public opinion or the results of this aggression and the repercussions on the peace process, which might fragment like the bodies of the victims and be buried along with those who are buried under the rubble that results from the fierce shelling.

We are not astonished by Israel's launching of such attacks, because, based on our experience, we realize that attacks like these can always be expected, especially because they are in line with Israel's aggressive nature. What is astonishing is the United States' stand toward this aggression, which Lebanon has been exposed to for several days. In fact, the strangest thing is the United States' voicing support for the Israeli aggression, defending it, justifying it, and expressing its readiness to foil any UN Security Council resolution denouncing this aggression, if Lebanon lodges a complaint with the council.

Undoubtedly, this stand makes us wonder about the credibility and seriousness of the United States with regard to working for peace in the region. It also makes us wonder about what the United States really meant when it announced through its president that it will be a full and honest partner. It is clear that the United States' reaction to the continued Israeli aggression against Lebanon has indisputably eliminated its honesty and has maintained only its partnership.

The partnership, as it appears on the ground, has been struck with Israel. Otherwise, Israel would not have done what it did. Israel felt confident that the United States would not hesitate to express its support, adopt its allegations, promote its excuses and justifications, and hold the Lebanese national resistance responsible for what Israel was forced to do, as claimed by a senior U.S. State Department official.

But how can the resistance be responsible? This is something that can be said only by someone who is biased in favor of Israel and who adopts its allegations and falsehoods. Can anyone imagine that a fair and impartial person would take a stand like this? Can falsehood reach this degree in distorting facts and twisting the truth? How can the resistance be responsible? Is it occupying Israeli territory? Is it not Israel that occupies Lebanese territory? And is it not Israel that expelled and is expelling its inhabitants and drove and is still driving out its citizens? What do Israel and the United States expect from a people whose territory was usurped and whose dignity was injured? Should they have welcomed the aggressor, received him with songs of praise, and built arches of triumph for him? Does Israel have the right to act belligerently and practice its sport of aggression whenever it wants, without realizing that the victim of aggression has the right to confront it, resist the aggression, and deal with this aggression in an appropriate manner?

The Israel aggression against Lebanon is in fact an aggression against the international community even more than it is an aggression against Lebanon. The world cannot continue to ignore Israel's crimes and stand idly by while Israel continues to show disdain for international resolution and undermine the chances for peace.

If Israel refuses, out of intransigence and arrogance, to abandon its aggressive course and insists on maintain the unrestrained violence in the region, with all the dangers of this violence and its repercussions for world peace and security and the interests of its people, then the international community should reconsider its

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calculations and positions so that it is in harmony with its principles and dedicated to its charters and so that it can affirm that it is concerned about the soundness of its balances and the singularity of its standards.

Syria: Official on Turkish-Israeli Accord, Jordan

JN1304064296 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1805 GMT 12 Apr 96

[Interview with Syrian Assistant Foreign Minister 'Adnan 'Imran by 'Ali al-Jammalu; place and date not given; from the "Week's Harvest" program — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Imran] To clarify matters, I would like to say that the Turkish-Israeli accord is a strategic military and security agreement. These terms are highly significant. This accord provides for overflights, the use of military bases; that is, the presence of Israeli aircraft at Turkish bases, the use of the Turkish airspace by Israeli aircraft, the conducting of security espionage along the Turkish borders in the north.

[Al-Jammalu, interrupting] In the north and east.

['Imran] The espionage activities will cover Arab and Islamic states. It goes without saying that this has been made public knowledge. There are many other things that some parties are trying to conceal. It is only natural that this accord has drawn concern and amazement. The concern is caused by the fact that Turkey is a neighboring country. Its people are a Muslim people. Moreover, Turkey is a member of the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC]. As such, it is expected to comply with the OIC's principles and resolutions. This country has concluded an agreement with Israel, one that promotes the level of its ties with Israel to that of a military and security alliance. It should be recalled that Israel is occupying Arab Jerusalem and usurping Islamic holy shrines in violation of many resolutions passed by the OIC, including resolutions adopted in Istanbul at a meeting or two meetings of the OIC held there. Hence, this question is extremely important. This development is extremely peculiar because it reflects swimming against the current; that is, if we suppose that there is a current of peace in the region. International efforts are currently devoted to the achievement of just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. This is the outcome of the Madrid conference. All international moves are aimed at boosting this endeavor. This accord involves two countries that are speaking of a new Middle East, one in which peace prevails. This accord lays bare claims, as well as all the false statements made about a new Middle East. Why? Because the new Middle East must be a framework for comprehensive economic cooperation. The first activity involving these two Middle Eastern states, which are parties to the new scheme, took the form of forging a military and security alliance against the countries of the region.

This alliance does not target one party only. The Turkish people are the first victims because Turkey will be losing a lot as a result of this alliance. The provisions of this alliance reveal that Israel is the first and last winner. All neighboring countries have the right to feel that there is a serious security threat. I do not mean only Syria when I say all neighboring countries. This alliance is a threat to the security of the Gulf states and some Arab countries in North Africa because it is a transfer of destructive and hostile power from Turkey to Israel and vice versa in an alliance that is hostile in nature.

Syria's stand proceeds from this premise. It is a wise stand. We expressed our regret and concern. We reminded Turkish officials of their commitments toward the OIC resolutions. We also reminded them of the ties that link them with countries in the region and that this should encourage these countries to thoroughly reconsider their ties with Turkey. We demanded that Turkish officials reconsider this agreement, because we are serious in our persistent work and will continue to be so for the sake of good neighborly relations with Turkey. We believe that the relationship should be one of friendship and cooperation based on the principles of international law — in other words, the principle of not relinquishing any of our rights. These are principles. Syria has continuously been concerned about international cooperation. However, it is equally concerned about not relinquishing any of its rights. Concerning Turkey, we have water rights. We will not relinquish a single drop of the Arab right to the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers.

[Al-Jammalu] Let us consider statements from Ankara on this issue. Ankara is saying that there is a similar or a somewhat less Syrian-Greek agreement. What is your comment on this particular point?

['Imran'] Our relations with Greece have been good since time immemorial. However, Syria is not among countries that lease their territories or airports. Syria held out in the face of all challenges throughout the years — especially at these times — under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad. Friendship means friendship. It does not mean relinquishing any rights.

Evidently, what Turkey raised aimed to stir up dust, hoping to provide a cover for the declared agreement. I summoned the Turkish ambassador and informed him of all information about this subject. He went there [not further specified] and a statement was issued by the Turkish Foreign Ministry stressing the incorrectness of the reports about a Syrian-Greek agreement. Therefore, there is no justification at all. The only justification is

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that there is an Israeli interest and an Israeli ability to bring pressure to bear on Turkey. Hence the agreement.

[Al-Jammalu] Mr. 'Adnan 'Imran, let us please consider the timing issue. Why this agreement at this time in particular when the peace process is back on ice?

['Imran] Of course, a great deal can be said in this framework. I do not want analysis to lead us too far from the starting point. Assuming that the objective is to bring pressure to bear on Syria — and this is a major possibility — the signatories to the agreement should have the ability to understand ancient and recent history. Syria is not a state that yields to pressures. Syria had rejected greater and much stronger pressures by states of greater weight than these powers. Syria successfully confronted those challenges, not because of its great size, but because of its balanced policy and the conformity of this policy with principles. This made the Syrian policy not only a reflection of the Syrian people's will, but, having returned from a journey of joint Arab action for 15 years within the framework of the Arab League, I say that Syria's policy is admired and appreciated by Arab citizens everywhere, from the Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean in the west. The reason is that Syria represents the Arab citizens' hopes and aspirations, which have been crushed through the concessions and the rush [toward Israel] which we have been witnessing here and there.

[Al-Jammalu] Could you please explain to us the issue of the presence of U.S. aircraft in Jordan and the link between this issue, if any, and the new agreement between Israel and Turkey?

['Imran] First, the presence of U.S. aircraft in a neighboring Arab country and at a phase that is supposed to be characterized by the pooling of all efforts and resources to achieve peace and security in the region completely contradicts and violates what is being raised in terms of action and principles concerning the achievement of peace. Why these drums of war? Why these military exercises? Why give the U.S. aircraft a free hand in the region's airspace? At the same time, let me remind you that there is a strategic agreement between the United States and Israel. Every U.S. military gain in any Arab airspace is inevitably a gain for Israel. I believe that Arab citizens are very sad to see such an infringement upon Arab airspace.

[Al-Jammalu] Thank you very much for all that you have kindly said.

['Imran] Thank you.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Acting Prime Minister Meets Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister

LD1504173196 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed acting Prime Minister Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai met the deputy foreign minister of Iran in his office today. BAKHTAR reported that during the meeting, Esteemed acting Prime Minister Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai spoke about the political situation in Afghanistan and other issues of interest. In response, Ala'eddin Borujerdi, deputy foreign minister of Iran, spoke about the measures taken by the Government of Iran to help ensure peace in Afghanistan. Iran's Ambassador in Kabul Gholam Reza Haddadi and the head of protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also present during the meeting.

According to another report, Dr. Najibollah Lafra'i, minister of state for foreign affairs, met Iran's deputy foreign minister in his office today. During the meeting, the minister of state for foreign affairs spoke about political developments and the interest of the state in solving problems through understanding. [passage indistinct]

Afghanistan: President Rabbani Discusses Relations With Iranian Official

LD1504210196 Tehran IRNA in English 2051 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, April 15, IRNA — Afghan-Iran relations and the latest developments in Afghanistan were discussed during the Monday [15 April] talk of Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Oceania, Ala'eddin Borujerdi, and Afghanistan President, Borhanoddin Rabbani, here.

Borujerdi conveyed the warm greetings of Iran's President Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, to his Afghan counterpart, inviting President Rabbani to take part in ceremonies inaugurating Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad link.

The deputy Iranian foreign minister said Tehran is closely following the developments in the expansion of cooperation with the Islamic Afghanistan.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry official expressed hope that Afghanistan-Pakistan relations will improve and the existing problems between the two countries removed.

Borujerdi pointed out that dialog is the best means for the settlement of differences among the warring parties in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan president thanked President Rafsanjani for his inviting Rabbani to attend the inaugural ceremonies of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad link, expressing his preparedness to participate in the ceremony.

Rabbani said expansion of existing cooperation between Iran and Afghanistan is the wish of the Afghan Government which is being closely and seriously followed.

President Rabbani voiced readiness to hold talks with the leaders of all Afghan groups.

The Afghan president pointed out that Afghanistan is in dire need for the reconstruction which can be attained in light of the prevalance of peace and stability in his country.

Afghanistan: Foreign Ministry Calls For Cessation of Israeli Attacks

LD1504174796 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan has called for the immediate cessation of Israel's military operation against the innocent people of Lebanon. A spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said: As it condemns the Zionist Air Force operation, launched under whatever pretext, against the innocent people of Lebanon, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan demands that Israel immediately stop killing and imposing a mass exodus on the people of that country. The spokesman called on all countries to prepare the ground for the immediate cessation of the operation by putting pressure on Israel.

Afghanistan: Government Forces Capture Dehyak From Taleban

LD1504125796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Afghan Foreign Ministry has announced that government forces have captured Dehyak region, in Ghowr Province, from the Taleban forces. According to a Central News Bureau report from Kabul at least 30 people, including two Taleban commanders, were killed in the operations and more than 10 tanks and other military equipment were destroyed.

Meanwhile in the last 24 hours, residential areas of Kabul were the target of several mortar rounds as the result of which a number of civilians were killed and 18 others wounded.

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Afghanistan: Dostam Addresses Peace Conference in Washington

LD1504163596 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam, leader of Junbesh-e Melli [National Movement], has addressed a peace conference in Washington on behalf of the High Coordination Council [HCC]. According to news agency reports, General Dostam, who is visiting the United States on behalf of the HCC, spoke for two hours on the current situation in Afghanistan and stated the stance of the HCC on the Afghan problem at a peace conference in Washington, which was attended by politicians from 25 U.S. states and representatives of different government departments. The reports say that Mrs. Robin Raphel, assistant secretary of state for South Asian affairs, also participated in the conference. She met General Dostam twice after the conference.

Answering a question on Hezb-e Eslami's [Islamic Party] talks with the Kabul administration, the leader of Junbesh-e Melli said: The Hezb-e Eslami-Kabul administration talks are not for the formation of a coalition government but for the peaceful transfer of power. The reports say: The United States [words indistinct] and wants peace and stability in Afghanistan and has asked other countries to stop interference in Afghanistan.

The report adds that General Dostam will meet UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali on 16 April.

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Wahdat Members Announce Support for Taleban

LD1504161696 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] One thousand members of Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan] have announced their support for the Taleban. According to a report by news agencies, talks between leaders of Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami and the Taleban started in Bamian on 12 April. Taleban sources said that Hezb-e Wahdat was represented at the talks by Sadeq Modaber and the Taleban by Mullah Khayrollah. The report adds that after the talks 1,000 members of Hezb-e Wahdat announced support for the Taleban.

India

India: Foreign Ministry Condemns Violence on Israel-Lebanon Border

BK1604052396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has expressed concern at the violence and threat to peace across the Israel-Lebanon border. A statement issued by the External Affairs Ministry in New Delhi last night says the hostilities will also adversely affect the ongoing peace process in the region. It deplored the loss of human lives and hardships caused to civilian population on both sides. The statement reiterated India's support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and unity of Lebanon. It called on all parties concerned to ensure immediate cessation of all hostilities and violence across the international border. As reported, Israel further intensified its air raids on Hezbollah strongholds in south Lebanon. Israeli warplanes carried out 17 raids on the port city of Tyre and surrounding areas yesterday. At least 28 people have been killed and over 100 injured during five days of Israeli onslaught.

India: Kashmiri Leaders Reportedly Escape Murder Attempt

BK1204154696 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Even as the situation in occupied Kashmir remains tense following the killing of two well-known human rights activists in Indian troops' custody within a month, the Indian ploy to hold elections in the valley received a major set back at UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

[Begin unidentified correspondent recording] The commission has accepted the document prepared by Jammu Kashmir Council for Human rights, which exposes grave violations of Kashmiris fundamental rights by occupation forces. The document is being circulated as a United Nations document under UN Economic and Social Council Resolution-1296. It says the Indian plan to hold elections in the held valley against the wishes of the people and leaders of All Parties Hurriyat Conference is an attempt to hoodwink world opinion; however, this ploy cannot succeed in forcing Kashmiris into giving up their pursuit for the right of self-determination.

Meanwhile, in held Kashmir itself, seven more people were killed by Indian troops during the last 24 hours. The military operations against civilians have assumed sinister dimensions as the occupation forces are using (?ever) more ruthless tactics to subdue Kashmiris resistance to the farcical elections.

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Two senior leaders of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference had a miraculous escape when two separate grenade explosions took place at their residences in Srinagar. The first attack took place late in the evening at the residence of Abdul Ghani Lone. The blast damaged the window panes of the building; however, nobody was injured in the attack. This is the third attempt on the life of Ghani Lone this year. Within two hours, another grenade was lobbed at the residence of another senior All Parties Hurriyat Conference leader, Syed Ali Shah Gilani, in the city's Pirbagh locality, but no one was injured. Talking to newsmen, Ghani Lone said All Parties Hurriyat Conference firmly believes that the Indian Government has directed its security forces to use brute force in quelling Kashmiri freedom struggle. They are eliminating the freedom fighters in a planned way. [end recording]

India: Congress-I Leader Escapes Assassination Attempt in Kashmir

BK1504164296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The high-level central team now reviewing the security arrangements for the Lok Sabha polls in Jammu and Kashmir continued its deliberations with the senior officers of the state government and the security forces in Srinagar today. The leader of the team, Mr. B.K. Jain, called on the state governor, General K.V. Krishna Rao, in Jammu. The governor said that all necessary steps have been taken to provide security to the candidates during the electioneering. Security arrangements for about 6,200 polling stations in the state have been worked out.

Meanwhile, the Pradesh [State] Congress-I general secretary, Mr. Taj Mohiuddin, escaped an attempt on his life when some explosive device was fired at a public meeting he was addressing at Dayalgam in Anantnag District today. The explosive, however, landed in an open field nearby. No one was injured in the incident. An official spokesman said in Srinagar this evening that police has registered a case and started investigations.

India: Rao Comments on Election Expense, Corruption, Babri Mosque

BK1204111596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister has ruled out issuing an ordinance or notification to increase the expenditure limit for the Lok Sabha and assembly candidates. Replying to a question at a news conference in New Delhi today, Mr. Narasimha Rao said that the election process has started and any revision of the ceiling can be taken up by the new government only. As reported, the Election Commission had recommended to the government to increase the ceiling from 4.5 lakh rupees for the Lok Sabha candidates to 15 lakh rupees.

Replying to a question on his alleged involvement in any corruption case, Mr. Narasimha Rao said he would have resigned if any allegation had been established against him. Mr. Rao said he does not want to cling to office is the charges were correct.

On party tickets being given to the kin of the hawala [illegal money transfer]-tainted former ministers, the Congress-I president said that these relatives cannot simply suffer for something which has not yet been established.

On reconstruction of the Babri Masjid [mosque], the prime minister reiterated the government's stand that it will abide by the court's decision.

India: Rao—Pakistan To Pay 'Very High Price' for Any 'Misadventure'

BK1204162896 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister has warned Pakistan that it will have to pay a very high price for any misadventure against India. Addressing a public meeting at Nizamabad in Andhra Pradesh this evening, Mr. Narasimha Rao pointed out that New Delhi had extended unconditional offers several times to Islamabad to have a dialogue in a bid to resolve the bilateral issues. Mr. Rao cautioned the people against communal forces trying to weaken the secular fabric of the nation.

India: Rao Warns Pakistan Against Starting Arms Race

BK1304161696 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Preparations are in full swing for the smooth conduct of the coming polls to the Lok Sabha and six assembly elections, even as campaigning has intensified with leaders of all major political parties addressing public meetings in various states.

Addressing a public meeting at Balaghat in Madhya Pradesh, the Congress-I president and prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, today warned Pakistan against starting an arms race in the subcontinent. Expressing concern over the acquisition of sophisticated arms by Pakistan, Mr. Rao said India has always wanted to maintain good relations with Islamabad.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] president, Mr. L.K. Advani, said his party stands for economic liberalization, but does not believe in emulating the West blindly.

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He was speaking at a meeting in Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu. [passage omitted]

India: Rao—U.S. Arms to Pakistan To 'Trigger Arms Race'

BK1504100196 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister says India is fully geared up to face the challenges of Pakistan acquiring sophisticated arms. Addressing a meeting in Kurukshetra today, Mr. Narasimha Rao said, as the country's security is of paramount importance, steps are being taken to face any eventuality. He pointed out that Pakistan-sponsored terrorism is still on in Kashmir, and the American decision to supply arms to Islamabad will only trigger an arms race in the South Asia region.

India: Pakistani Bid To Infiltrate 'Militants' Into Kashmir Foiled

BK1204162396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the Army foiled two attempts by Pakistani troops to infiltrate armed militants into Indian territory at Ghambir area of the Rajauri sector during the last two days. A huge cache of arms and ammunition was recovered from the militants; however, the militants managed to escape back into the Pakistan occupied Kashmir under the cover of firing by Pakistani troops. This was stated by a spokesman of the Defense Ministry at Jammu today.

India: Kashmir Governor Calls For Strengthened Security on Border

BK1604011596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Jammu and Kashmir governor, General K.V. Krishna Rao, has asked the BSF [Border Security Force] to strengthen security on the border to foil Pakistan's attempts to push in militants in the state to create violence during the elections. Gen. Rao visited the border areas of Jammu District today to take stock of the security arrangements. The governor who visited the forward post of Simbal said the Pakistani designs will be defeated, as all steps will be taken to check infiltration.

The inspector general of the BSF, Jammu Frontier, Mr. R.S. Mehta, gave the details of the forces' action in the area.

Iran

Iran: Further Details on Naval Exercise in Persian Gulf

LD1304192496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In the run up to 17 April, the Army Day of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Salman-1 of 75 [current Iranian year is 1375] exercise began in the crystal blue waters of the Persian Gulf, in the region between Bushehr and Jazireh-e Khark.

Naval units, including missile-launching frigates, support personnel-carrying and logistic warships, anti-surface air-to-sea air units [as heard], and the swift-flying personnel of the sixth fighter base of the air force will be taking part in the exercise that will continue for five days. The exercise will be carried out in seven stages.

The head of operations at the Second Naval District explained the aim of the exercise as being the assessment and consolidation of the combat-operational capabilities of naval units.

To mark this same occasion, a naval and coastal exercise by the North Naval Training Center began in the Caspian Sea today under the name of Mirza Kuchak Khan. This exercise, which is aimed at raising the skills and expertise of the personnel under the command of that center, will continue for a week. In the course of it, the participating forces will use the required resources and equipment to carry out military operations and transfer forces between different locations in order to achieve their predetermined aims.

Iran: Naval Maneuvers Continue in Persian Gulf

LD1304173096 Tehran IRNA in English 1659 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bandar-e 'Abbas, April 13, IRNA - In the second and third day of the exercise of Fat'h sea maneuver in the Persian Gulf waters and the strait of Hormuz, the Islamic Republic of Iran naval forces carried out war games in five different maneuvers successfuly.

During Saturday's [13 April] maneuver the participants completed systematic and non-systematic air defense of chemical, microbic and nuclear exercise, loading and disembarking of forces on the coast in attack position.

The marine forces also carried out exercise of fueling in the sea while in full mobility, electronic war, passing through mine-cleared canal, dispatch of forces in attack boats and count down for attack operations.

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The maneuver, code named "ya ali ibn abi taleb" [Oh 'Ali, son of Taleb] was launched on Thursday and will be ended up in Farvardin 29 (April 17).

Iran: Naval Exercises Continue in Persian Gulf

LD1404161496 Tehran IRNA in English 1522 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bushehr, April 14, IRNA — The third phase of the Salman-1 military exercise in the northern water of the Persian Gulf were successfully staged on Sunday [14 April].

Field commander of zone-2 of the Islamic Republic Naval forces, Captain Gholam Reza Masumi, said that units under his command accomplished the pre-arranged goals in the third phase.

The five-day Salman-1 military execise opened on Saturday [13 April].

Iran: Marines Carry Out Caspian Sea Maneuvers

LD1404171396 Tehran IRNA in English 1629 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bandar-e Anzali (Gilan Prov.) April 14, IRNA — Amphibian maneuovers codenamed 'Mirza Kuchak Khan' were staged in Iran's Caspian Sea waters for the second consecutive day on Saturday [13 April].

According to Captain Arab Pour [name as received] of the Northern Marine training center, the week-long military exercises being held off Bandar-e Anzali, are designed to test the prowess of the Marine personnel.

He said the ongoing exercises include counter-attacks at sea, crusing through canals, diving and assault on hypothetical enemy positions on shore under cover of helicopters and floating units.

Iran: Foreign Minister To Visit Syria 'Within Next 48 Hours'

JN1504164696 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Report by Muhammad Sadiq al-Husayni in Tehran]

[FBIS Translated Text] It was learned from Tehran sources close to the Lebanese file that Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati will visit Damascus within the next 48 hours. The visit is part of the French-Iranian initiative sought by French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette to stop the bloodshed in Lebanon and seek a way out of the escalating crisis there.

According to information confirmed by the same sources, the Iranian foreign minister will meet with de Charette, who will visit Syria for the same purpose. In addition, Syria will sponsor the bilateral mediation. The French side is expected to take care of urging the Israelis to halt the fighting, while Iran will try to convince Hizballah to abide by the famous Katyusha agreement.

Within the next few hours, a high-level Iranian envoy, Hojjat ol-Eslam Khansari, director general of the Middle East Department at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, will visit Lebanon and Syria. He will meet with senior Syrian and Lebanese officials for the same purpose. He will also extend urgent medical and humanitarian assistance to the Lebanese people.

In a meeting with officials from the Lebanese Islamic resistance today, Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i said that all Muslims worldwide should support the Lebanese people. He recommended that the resistance foil the Israeli scheme of aggression, which seeks to turn the Lebanese people against the resistance, on one hand, and sow differences between the resistance and the Lebanese Government, on the other.

Iran: Foreign Minister Velayati Leaves for Pakistan

LD1604055196 Tehran IRNA in English 0525 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 16, IRNA — Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati heading a ranking political delegation left here for Islamabad Tuesday [16 April] morning on an official visit.

During his visit, Velayati is to discuss with Pakistani officials promotion of Tehran-Islamabad ties, ways to upgrade regional cooperation as well as international and regional issues including the Afghanistan crisis.

He is also to invite Pakistani officials to attend the inaugural ceremony of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railways slated for May 13.

Iran: Delegation Departs for Lebanon With Message for Government

LD1504140096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Munir Talhuq, Lebanon's ambassador in Tehran, met our Foreign Minister Mr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati this morning and submitted to him a message from Lebanon's Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz.

After receiving this message, Mr. Velayati expressed regret and profound concern at the attacks against the innocent and defenseless people of Lebanon. He said: The Zionist regime is seeking to increase its hegemony over the region with full backing by America and it is

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currently pursuing this goal by the use of force, war, and aggression.

He added: In this respect, it is the duty of all Islamic countries to stand steadfast in the face of the hegemonistic drives of the Zionist occupiers. Regional countries should be alert to the objectives of this regime, which are hidden behind its false peace- seeking slogans.

Our country's foreign minister pointed to the Islamic Republic of Iran's humanitarian assistance to the war-stricken people of Lebanon and stressed the continuation of our country's political, regional, and international efforts to eradicate cruelty and aggression against Lebanon. He said that a senior delegation from our country's Foreign Ministry had departed for Beirut to convey a message of sympathy to the Government of Lebanon.

Iran: Velayati on Visit to Turkmen Border; Fighting in Lebanon

LD1304205696 Tehran IRNA in English 2027 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 13, IRNA - Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 'Ali Akbar Velayati, returned to Tehran on Saturday [13 April] after his tour of border areas of Khorasan Province along with Turkmenistan high-ranking officials.

Talking to IRNA at Tehran airport, Velayati evaluated his two day visit to the region as positive.

The Iranian foreign minister said that the talks with the Turkmenistan top officials, including the foreign minister and the vice president of that country as constructive, adding, "we have signed a memorandum of understanding."

In reference to the primary measures taken for inauguration of Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad link, Velayati said invitation letters have been handed over to the heads and representatives of countries associated with the project or interested in the enterprise, noting that plans are underway to hold a meeting of the deputy foreign ministers of Iran and Turkmenistan in Sarakhs for this purpose in the near future.

The foreign minister underlined the significance of commissioning of railway link, pointing out that railroad links will help expedite relationship between Iran and Turkmenistan as well as that of the Central Asian republics, in particular, and the commonwealth of independent states, in general, with the other parts of the world.

Velayati added that the inauguration of the railroad link will promote economic development of these regions, besides fostering cultural relations among these countries.

He expressed hope that all government organizations should work in concert with one another so as to achieve success in this respect.

In another part of his talk to IRNA, Iran's foreign minister strongly condemned the recent invasions of the Zionist regime on Lebanon and said what is going on today in Lebanon bears witness to the aggressive nature of the Zionist usurpers.

Velayati added that the Zionist regime spares no stone unturned in order to achieve its illegitimate ends.

The foreign minister went on to say that Zionists recognized no frontier in the materialization of its goals, adding that "this regime's inhuman acts cannot be explained by any standard."

The minister called on the U.N. and the Western governments to respond positively to the outcries of freedom-loving people of the world and the world public opinion and stop the Zionist regime's savage attacks.

Velayati concluded that the Qods [Jerusalem] occupying regime is the sworn enemy of Islam and Muslims and that the world of Islam is dutybound to defend the interests of the world of Islam and Islamic aspirations.

Iran: Velayati Urges U.S. To Help Stop Lebanon Violence

LD1304205496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. ['Ali Akbar] Velayati, our country's foreign minister, announced on Saturday [13 Arpil] night: Israel's savage attacks on and acts of inhumanity in Lebanon are revealing, more than ever, the true nature of the Zionists in the political arena of the Middle East.

According to the Central News Unit's correspondent, our country's foreign minister stated: The world's public opinion and governments must ask themselves why it should be that the Lebanese nation and government must be subjected to such pressure simply because of their legitimate wish to implement UN Security Council resolution 425, which demands an end to the occupation of their territory.

Mr. Velayati added: Israel's actions in Lebanon and the killing of that country's innocent and defenseless people cannot be justified in any way, and western governments, including the United States, which have consistently supported Israel, must strive to halt the killing of the people of Lebanon.

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Regarding the recent agreement between Israel and Turkey for the military use of Turkish airspace, Mr. Velayati explained: We have frankly and explicitly told Turkish officials that the interest of Islamic countries dictates that they should impede factors that make Israel more hardline in its positions. He said: Iran and Turkey are neighbors and we will not remain silent on any development that threatens the national security of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Mr. Velayati said: We will continue our talks with Turkish government officials in this regard.

Iran: Tehran Radio Assails U.S. Support for Israeli 'Atrocities'

LD1404122396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1000 GMT 14 Apr 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Zionist regime's savage aggression against Lebanon, which has resulted in hundreds of casualties and more than 200,000 refugees, and devastated a large sector of urban and rural residential areas, in particular in the southern part of that country, has provoked a wave of anger and revulsion not only among Muslim nations but also in world public opinion. These acts of aggression revive the bitter memories of the atrocious 1982 aggression by Israel against southern Lebanon and once again force the Islamic and Arab countries to ponder the evil nature of the Zionist regime and the impossibility of a compromise with that illegitimate government.

International reaction to Israeli atrocities in southern Lebanon in the past few days has been so negative and full of exasperation that it has forced the occupier Zionist regime to adopt reactive stances. In fact, it can be said that, among Israel's supporters, America more than others supports Israel's recent wickedness in its undeniable and blatant violation of Lebanese independence, territorial integrity, and national sovereignty. Nevertheless, things have come to a point where even the White House spokesman, in a reaction to recent Israeli atrocities in southern Lebanon, has tried to present the boundless aggression against civilians by Israel as a defensive action.

Anyhow, Israeli attacks against southern Lebanon have once again demonstrated that any reconciliatory and peaceful endeavor in the face of a regime conceived of aggression and atrocity is futile and a costly mistake. That is because Israel has never wanted peace and has always exploited the so-called peace process to consolidate its expansionist objectives.

Now, while the massacre of the defenseless Lebanese people at the hands of ruthless Zionist agents continues, Islamic and Arab countries have swiftly decided to begin coordinated action to confront those atrocities. The first move in this regard is the consultations and discussions initiated by the Islamic Republic of Iran with Islamic states to find ways to prevent the continuation of Israeli attacks against Lebanon.

Now, more than ever, it is incumbent on the United Nations and independent world states, particularly Islamic countries, to act to end the atrocities perpetrated intermittently against Muslims by the Zionist regime, this time against the Muslim Lebanese nation.

Iran: Developments in Southern Lebanon Viewed

NC1504063696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 15 Apr 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Zionist forces' raids on various areas in Lebanon from the air, land, and sea continue, and last night—for the fourth consecutive night—Zionist forces attacked villages and cities in southern Lebanon.

These blind assaults, the main objective of which is to terrorize the Lebanese people and government and to force them to surrender to the Zionist regime and America, have made many of the residents in southern Lebanon leave for other areas of the country. The homelessness of hundreds of thousands of defenseless people reminds one of a similar human tragedy that took place three years ago, after the Zionist regime's aggression against southern Lebanon. At that time, 500,000 Lebanese, who were under heavy Zionist fire, left their homes and fled to other areas.

However, it seems that the Zionist regime's fresh aggression, which comes after consecutive defeats on the political scene and is taking place on the eve of Israeli elections, is of vaster and more violent dimensions. According to Western sources, Zionist Prime Minister Shim'on Peres is trying to resort to strong measures against the Lebanese and Palestinian people in a bid to increase his chances in the upcoming Israeli elections.

Nevertheless, four days after the Zionist regime's fresh aggression against Lebanon and the massacre of civilians in that country, no favorable reaction has been seen by Western governments and responsible international organizations. Of course, the American Government has supported Israeli's crimes in Lebanon—at first tacitly

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and then officially, from the mouth of its secretary of state—and has said that the Tel Aviv regime is authorized to carry out any type of operation in Lebanon.

It is said that the White House is trying to postpone the UN Security Council session that is to meet tonight to discuss the Lebanese Government's complaint. Although one can foresee that if this session is held, Washington will use its veto power and prevent the Security Council from deciding against the Zionist regime. Undoubtedly it is this support by America and some other Western governments which has helped the Zionists in continuing their occupation of southern Lebanon, in ignoring Security Council Resolution 425 on withdrawal from these territories, and in repeating its attacks on Lebanese territory. Therefore, in view of the terrorist and aggressive nature of this regime, nothing but this should be expected of it. It is the responsible international forums and western governments, and especially the U.S. Government, that should be reprimanded.

Iran: Lebanese, Syrian Ambassadors Condemn Israeli Attacks

LD1504085596 Tehran IRNA in English 0706 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 15, IRNA — Ahmad al-Hasan and Munir Talhuk, Syrian and Lebanese ambassadors to Tehran, respectively, urged the European Union (EU) to stop Israel from killing and injuring innocent civilians, reported the English daily 'IRAN NEWS' Monday [15 April]. Talking to the daily, the two ambassadors castigated the Israeli raids and appealed to human rights organizations to attach priority to investigations into the plight of the oppressed Lebanese people. Terming the situation as very dangerous, the Lebanese ambassador said that specific steps should be taken to keep Israel in its right sense.

Turning to last week's visit to Lebanon of French President Jacques Chirac, Talhuk said most people have pinned their hopes on him. He noted that the peace talks have faced difficulties and said that Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has launched the attacks to distract people's minds from domestic problems via military adventurism.

So far, 400,000 Lebanese have become homeless, while scores have been killed and injured, he said and appealed to friendly countries to take the necessary steps. Emphasizing that violence could not solve any problem, he called on the eu to press Israel for the speedy implementation of the security council resolution 425.

The Syrian ambassador also said that the brutal attacks on Lebanese civilians were a clear proof of the Israeli tendency for state terrorism. Al-Hasan said that at the threshold of parliamentary elections in may, the Israeli government led by Shim'on Peres is committing such crimes in order to persuade the Israelis that they are tougher against the Islamists.

Urging human rights organizations to voice concern and halt the Israeli crimes in Lebanon, the ambassador warned that the Middle East peace process is at stake.

Meanwhile, in an interview with the Persian daily 'JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI', al-Hasan said that the Arab, Islamic and international public opinion should be mobilized to condemn Israeli aggression against Lebanese civilians and children and to stop the Zionist aggression. The U.N., U.S., Russia and the European Union should also be called upon to prevent continuation of brutal Israeli attacks against innocent people including women and children in Lebanon, said the diplomat. The Syrian ambassador added that the Zionist attacks on civilians and hospitals speak of aggressive and criminal nature of the Zionist regime.

He urged the international community specially those who claim to be the upholders of the banner of human rights to condemn the aggression and reveal the aggressive and wicked nature of Israel. He added that it should become known that Israel is a terrorist regime which does not differentiate between defenceless women and innocent children and other people.

Iran: IRAN NEWS Urges UN Deadline for Israel To Evacuate Lebanon

LD1604090396 Tehran IRNA in English 0724 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 16, IRNA — The English daily 'IRAN NEWS' Tuesday [16 April] commented on the Zionists' artillery blitz of Lebanon, urging the Security Council to carry out its responsibility and put an end to Zionist usurpation. Important developments took place in the past two days to stop the deadly situation in Lebanon, which threatens peace in the entire region, said the editorial, referring to the exchange of views between the Iranian and French foreign ministers on launching joint actions and the visit to various countries of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri.

Criticizing U.S. support for Israel's criminal bombardment of Lebanon that has resulted in heavy civilian casualties and rendered hundreds of thousands of people homeless, it said that Washington and Tel Aviv should know that the Lebanese would not sit silent while their

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homeland was occupied. Trouble has erupted in the region once in a while since the usurpation of the area, noted the paper, adding this would continue as long as south Lebanon is under occupation. Stressing that the only solution to the problem was to end the usurpation, IRAN NEWS said that all hopes are now pinned on the ongoing Security Council meet.

"The prestige of the body is at stake," it remarked, showing doubt, however, as to whether the council would really do justice or just obey the orders of the U.S.

"The 15-member council should realize its historical responsibility and issue a time limit to Israel on its resolution no. 425 to vacate the occupied land in south Lebanon." Otherwise, "Israel should face the same fate as Iraq in 1991, when it had to be forcibly thrown back from its neighbor, Kuwait," concluded the daily.

Iran: Israeli Attacks on Lebanon 'Prime Example' of Terrorism

LD1604081596 Tehran IRNA in English 0730 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] U.N., New York, April 16, IRNA — Iran's envoy to the U.N. here Monday [15 April] strongly condemned the flagrant violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity by Israel saying it is prime example of act of terrorism by Israeli policy makers who only too readily and conveniently label others either terrorist or its supporter.

Addressing the U.N. Security Council, the Islamic Republic's deputy permanent representative to the U.N., Majid Takht-Ravanchi stated that the recent acts of terrorism by Zionist leaders as an organized cabal have resulted in killing and wounding of several hundred innocent civilians, forcing the displacement of hundreds of thousands people who are increasing by the hour, and infliction of great material damage in Lebanon.

"Israel's obstinacy to continue its bombardment of innocent people in Lebanon, disregarding the international outrage and diplomatic initiatives, clearly points to the fact that the Zionist leaders have a pre-planned agenda for the region and tend not to cease their military operation until their illegal objectives are achieved."

He added, "Israeli media blitz to disguise its acts of terrorism under the pretext of retaliatory measure does not withstand the most rudimentary tests, and adds insult to the injury."

The draconian measures the Zionist regime has imposed for more than a month against Palestinian people in the occupied territories is an instance of Israeli intransigence, he noted.

"These Israeli measures which are implemented under the barrel of gun and has inflicted untold hardship and sorrow on Palestinian people, paralyzing their life in an unprecedented fashion, are in total violation of the rules and principles of international law which should be condemned accordingly and ceased forthwith."

Denouncing the recent cowardly and savage attacks against defenseless civilians in Lebanon, he called on the Security Council to condemn the recent terrorist acts by Israel in that country.

"The violation of international law on the part of Israel is so enormous and vivid that lack of adequate and necessary response by the council to such practices will only encourage the aggressor to continue its aggression."

Iran's envoy further underlined that the Security Council should prevent such perception to gain ground for the sake of saving the lives of innocent Lebanese civilians and for the sake of its own credibility.

At the end of his speech, Takht-Ravanchi rejected totally the fabrications made by the representative of the Zionist regime saying, it is ironic that the occupying regime expects general surrender and submission of not only every and all of the peoples and groups in the occupied lands, but also it wishes to silence any other voice in moral support of Lebanese people who are struggling to free their homeland from foreign occupation.

Iran: Yazdi Denounces International Silence on Attacks on Lebanon

LD1604100296 Tehran IRNA in English 0922 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 16, IRNA — The head of judiciary Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi here Monday [15 April] night denounced silence of international bodies towards Zionist savage attacks and massacre of the Muslim people of Lebanon.

He stated that the Israeli all-out attacks on Lebanon and its use of weapons of mass destruction with the backing of the U.S. cannot be halted through sham resolutions of the U.N.

Ayatollah Yazdi further urged the international societies including the U.N., the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to take prompt and decisive measures towards the expansionist policies of the U.S. and the Zionist regime.

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Iran: Tehran Agrees To Combat Terrorism With EU

MM1504142196 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Apr 96 p 4

[Report by Ibrahim Khayyat: "Information About Tehran's Suspension of Financial and Military Support for Hamas: Iran Informed European Troika of Its Agreement To Cooperate To Combat Terrorism"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Toledo, Spain — Informed European sources have told AL-HAYAH that Iran has agreed to security cooperation with EU member states in the area of combating terrorism and to publicly condemn terrorist actions against civilians. The sources pointed out that diplomatic efforts are being made to crystallize an understanding on the Iranian fatwa against the author Salman Rushdie so as to declare it null and void.

The sources said that Iran told the European Troika delegation which visited Tehran recently that it draws a major distinction between its support for Hamas and its support for Hizballah in Lebanon, on the grounds that the latter "has a legitimate right to defend and recover occupied territories."

According to the sources, Tehran told the delegation that it now has no link with Hamas "and no longer provides any political, military, or financial support for Hamas, and that it has ceased to provide training for Hamas elements." The sources described the visit as constructive and positive. [passage omitted]

Iran: Israeli Claims of Iranian Support for Terrorism Denounced

LD1304184096 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 9 Apr 96 p2

[Editorial: "Peres Plays 'Iran-Card'"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] For Israel now, it has become routine to divert public attention from internal crises to a foreign enemy, the Islamic Republic of Iran.

There is no doubt that Israel — as the Leader of the Deprived, the late Imam Khomeyni said — is our 'enemy number one.' Iran's policy for this is crystal clear. The Islamic Republic has never, and will never, recognize usurpation or occupation of the lands of the oppressed Palestinians.

Iran has with all its might opposed Israel's suppression of the Palestinians and will continue to do so in the future, even at the cost of its national interests.

It is also clear that Iran's opposition to the Zionist regime has never crossed the diplomatic channel. And this is the reason that both Israel and its guardian, the United States, could produce no evidence to support their claim that Iran is involved in terrorist activities.

They beckoned their allies in the West, who demanded that they produce evidence against Iran. The answer was silence. During a visit to Israel last month, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel directly asked Israel to present evidence in support of their allegations against Iran. The German official then told the press that Israel had no evidence against Tehran.

A similar response was given to Israel and the U.S. by the European Union which, despite the strong opposition of Washington, continued dialogue with Iran to iron out possible differences between the two.

Following so many disappointments, Israel launched a new anti-Iran technique to fill the void of evidence.

On Sunday [7 April] evening, the Zionist regime announced it had arrested a Palestinian youth who claimed he was recruited in Turkey and trained in Iran to carry out anti-Israeli attacks for the Islamic Jihad.

As far as training is concerned, no-one has to come over here for it, as the Palestinians have enough room around Israel to continue their genuine struggle. There are Palestinians who have decades-old, practical experience in their struggle against occupation, and they do not need an outside hand. So this story is nothing but another attempt in their disinformation campaign against Iran which is doomed to failure.

A similar, joke-like story is attributed to Zionist Prime Minister Shim'on Peres who on Sunday claimed that an Iranian ship loaded with explosives destined for use against Jewish targets was intercepted by Belgian authorities.

Interestingly, no word of confirmation of Peres' claim has surfaced from Belgian authorities, and it looks like Israel, right or wrong, is trying to involve Iran in these activities only to divert its people's attention from domestic problems and the troubled peace process, to issues which in fact do not exist at all.

The Americans and the Zionists should remember that they may deceive some people some of the time, but not all the people all the time.

Iran: Paper Criticizes 'Inaction' on Israel, Turkey

NC1504091096 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 9 Apr 96 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "The Zionist Regime's Threats and the Foreign Ministry's Inaction"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The military cooperation agreement between Turkey and the Zionist regime occupy-

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ing Palestine is taking on new dimensions each day. On the basis of reports citing Turkish Defense Minister Oltan Sungurlu, this agreement will grant the Israeli fighters the right to use Turkish airspace. This report has sparked various reactions among the region's countries, and there have also been protests in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in Syria, in Lebanon, and even in Egypt. And this has made the Turkish Defense Ministry reject the report saying that this cooperation agreement does not grant the Israeli pilots permission to use Turkish airspace.

It seems that this refutation is considered the convenient way to act in the face of these protests since we also have the Turkish ambassador's remarks in Tel Aviv. He has admitted that Israeli pilots can use Turkish airspace, adding that this is an insignificant issue. And this leaves no place for doubts that the regime occupying Jerusalem has received such a permission from Turkey. As we have previously noted in this newspaper, in addition to the dangers that it creates for the regional Islamic countries, this agreement also grants the Zionist regime the opportunity to approach the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In other words, Turkey's cooperation agreement with the regime occupying Palestine is a serious military threat against all the region's countries and namely the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Undoubtedly the region's countries' calculated reactions can force the Turkish Government to abrogate this agreement and to defeat the Zionists in their fresh plot against which there has been a reaction by some countries and even the Egyptian Government, which is the founder of the compromise process with the Zionists. However, our foreign ministry has not taken any action, and yesterday, a week after this incident, the foreign minister only sufficed to express regrets!

In addition to the developments in Turkey, our Foreign Ministry's reaction to the sly and dangerous acts by the Zionist regime in the Persian Gulf has also been extremely weak. The fact that the Foreign Ministry spokesman only states that these acts are not in the interest of the region's countries is a much weaker reaction than would have been expected even of compromising regimes and is not, in any way, in concordance with the clear and decisive stands of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the regime occupying Palestine. Unfortunately, this is the same situation that prevails on our northern borders, too.

Would it not have been better for our foreign minister to spend his time to think about the threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran emanating from the Zionists' efforts in the south, the west, and the north of our borders instead of making historic remarks on television?

The truth is that all this inaction by our Foreign Ministry officials vis-a-vis the Zionist regime is questionable. The Foreign Ministry should explain to public opinion why it has fallen short and why it has not adopted a serious approach like everybody else.

Iran: SALAM Scores West's 'Unilateral Dialogue' With Iran

NC1504103596 Tehran SALAM in Persian 3 Apr 96 pp 12, 2

[Political commentary: "Unilateral Dialogue"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Fifteen EU members met in Palermo under the chairmanship of Italy to discuss and to decide on policy making and the possibility of continued relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. This session came after Islamic resistance's defense in the occupied Palestinian territories and the uprising against the Zionist forces' arrests, tortures, and massacres of the defenseless Palestinian people. [passage omitted]

The plan for Western and European pressures on Iran was propounded within the perpetual framework of criticisms against our country and it was decided that the three foreign ministers [as published] of Spain, Italy, and Ireland pay a one-day visit to Tehran — on 4 April. Actually this visit is in continuation of the conference that was held in Egypt's Sharm-al-Shaykh last month under the chairmanship of America and against the Islamic resistance of Palestine and Iran. [passage omitted]

In Europe's unilateral critical dialogues against Islamic Iran, it is Europe's wishes and impositions that are always propounded with Europe trying to gradually gain all the concessions that it can. In the unilateral dialogue no mention is made of the existence of monafeq [hypocrites — pejorative for the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] terrorists and of the murderers of hundreds of Iranian officials and people throughout the Western world. Nothing is said about the political, financial, arms, and other assistance extended by Washington, Bonn, and London to this group. And if anything is said, nothing is achieved.

In the unilateral dialogues, no importance is attached to the rights of the Palestinians in their motherland or to the rights of the Muslims in Europe and America, while the issue of human rights in Iran should be solved exactly according to the wishes of the West. In this type of dialogue, the Persian Gulf is saturated with Western, and especially American arms and ammunition, and turns into a powder keg against Islamic Iran, while Iran is portrayed as being the one who is seeking destructive and nuclear arms. And in the opinion of the West, our

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country should only use Kalashnikovs to defend itself so that no harm will be inflicted on the American and European fleets in the region.

In the critical and unilateral dialogue each day and each hour, the Islamic values, culture, and belief of Muslims throughout the West are ridiculed on charges of cultural clashes, while the decree on the punishment of a British slanderer who has insulted the sanctities of Muslims is expected to be retrieved and to be cast into oblivion and noted only in history books. Europe is not even prepared to respect all the recognized religions in history because if it does, then its unilateral dialogue with the Muslims, too, will lose its lustre.

And finally, in the West's unilateral dialogue, the Western hostages and spies should be freed without any mediation and the sentence on Szimkus, the German spy of Iraqi origin, should be lifted while Iranian officials are accused and prosecuted one after the other. And all this so that the agenda of the critical and unilateral dialogue will always continue to exist, so that the major actors in this dialogue will always be kept occupied and so that it will be easier to inflict the final blow on the bastions of the Islamic Revolution and system.

Iran: Editorial Criticizes U.S. Attitude Toward Iran

LD1204220996 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 9 Apr 96 p 2

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sixteen years ago the United States cut off diplomatic ties with the newly established Islamic Republic of Iran ostensibly over the "U.S. hostage crisis." To the visible humiliation of the Carter administration it turned out that most diplomats and staff at the former "den of spies" in Tehran belonged less to the diplomatic corps and more to the notorious Central Intelligence Agency.

Then, as now, Washington proclaimed that Tehran would be made to pay a heavy price for holding its diplomats but created one of the biggest embarrassments for the western superpower which had already been dislodged by the 1979 Islamic Revolution. The not-so-unexpected but sudden overthrow of America's "gendarme" in the oil-rich Persian Gulf sent shockwaves throughout the U.S.-led Western alliance which on Washington's insistence and greed had invested a lot of political capital in the Pahlavi monarchy.

Since April 1980 until now three successive White House administrations and the all powerful Zionist lobby in America's executive and legislative branches left no stone unturned to get rid of Iran's Islamic identity and hurl the nation into the abyss of political, economic and social turmoil.

Right from Iraq's destructive military offensive in 1980 to non-stop anti-Iran campaigns in all possible fields were forcefully engineered in Washington and Tel Aviv but failed miserably to produce the desired results. Conspiracies (one or two of which were enough to turn any other regime upside down) followed at very close intervals as America emerged as the undisputed power in the strategic region to silence any voice of opposition against itself and the Zionist regime.

Looking at Iran during the pre-revolutionary years one realizes the nature of U.S. hostility vis-a-vis the post-revolutionary set up. After all the shah's Iran was chosen by Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger as America's closest ally and policeman of the Middle East to, among other things, safeguard American interest and keep the so-called anti-Israeli regimes in check.

Not only did all those arrangements turn out to be useless, the unprecedented upheaval caused by the late Imam Khomeyni awakened Muslim masses, from Mindanao to Madagascar, to what American friendship is really worth. America's political history hardly consists of so many challenges and outright failures as witnessed in the years it decided to confront Iran and its Muslim people.

Just last month U.S. Middle East policy suffered such a major blow that President Bill Clinton was forced to personally urge 30 heads of state to meet in Sharm-al-Shaykh to help keep the Mideast compromise deals on track.

Today's America, perceived as the world's largest bully, hardly commands the respect (fear would be more appropriate) it did before the 1979 Islamic Revolution. As the world prepares to enter the 21st century, nations in increasing numbers, from China to Cuba, are telling the great satan to mind its own business and let them mind theirs.

For obvious reasons America's shortsightedness lies in the fact that its rulers think U.S. power is indisputed and uncontested. Islamic Iran is only one among the growing number of nations which conclusively demonstrated that perception to be close to a phantom. Undermining the Islamic set up in Tehran and identifying Iran as a "rogue state" has not in any way helped Washington's policymakers. America's image in the Muslim world is changing much faster than U.S. rulers can comprehend.

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Iran: Radio Comments on U.S. Sanctions, European Union Attitude

LD1304135996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 13 Apr 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Italian foreign minister, Susanna Angelly, said on Thursday [11 April] in Washington that the United States, by approving bills against Iran and Libya, has actually endangered the interests of the EU in the two countries. She said the EU opposes this policy. The rotational head of the EU, the Italian foreign minster, emphasized in a press conference that the EU considers it a legitimate right to legally respond to those U.S. policies that endanger EU's interests in Iran or Libya.

Political analysts believe that the comment of the rotational head of the EU came in response to the wide-scale pressure of the U.S. to make EU participate in the anti-Iranian sanctions. After the imposition of U.S. sanctions against Iran last June, U.S. pressure on the EU states to join the embargo increased. Washington tried on many occasions to get the consent of her allies by levelling baseless accusations against Iran. So far, this has been in vain.

Also, earlier the spokesman for the EU foreign trade criticized U.S. policies, saying Washington is trying to dictate her policies to other countries. The spokesman also emphasized that U.S. measures should not contradict international norms. Nevertheless evidence shows that U.S. foreign policies in employing the sanctions leverage to counter Iran has so far proved fruitless.

On the whole one can say that the world today is moving towards economic integration very quickly and various forms of economies are beginning to form closer bonds. In this world, using economic leverage unilaterally by one country is contrary to international laws. On the U.S. economic embargo against Iran, it is quite evident that the world does not welcome such a Washington policy. The world will neither sacrifice economic ties with Iran due to unilateral U.S. policies.

Even if the EU changes its policy towards Iran, there will be no change in the principled policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran vis-a-vis dominant-seeking policies of America.

Iran: Ayatollah Khamene'i Warns Against 'Extravagant Expenditures'

LD1504171296 Tehran IRNA in English 1630 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Apr 15, (IRNA) — The leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Seyed 'Ali Khamene'i, here Monday [15 April] said that the auditing department of the state could do a lot by way of identifying as well as checking extravagant expenditures by government agencies.

Ayatollah Khamene'i stated that wasteful expenditures and wasteful use of resources would lead to corruption in the society, and that those who squandered national resources for purely luxury purposes and fun-making would be responsible for having corrupted the society.

The leader of Islamic revolution pointed out that the issue had been cited in the holy Koran as an element capable of hurling the society into its eventual doom, and that therefore, it had to be done without.

Ayatollah Khamene'i who was addressing a visiting group of the ranking staffers of the state auditing department said the fact of the department having been constitutionally brought under the scrutiny of the islamic consultative assembly (majles) had implications of the gravity of its tasks, and added that the department would do better to maintain a bolder presence on the scene both for the purpose of preventing irregularities and for offering reports that would answer the inquiries of the people about public expenditures.

The leader said the masses had questions in connection with the fundings of election campaigns by certain majles candidates which question he said, was being already addressed by certain other government agencies with the involvement of the judiciary where needed.

Ayatollah Khamene'i wished the visiting officials success in the performance of their task.

Iran: Army Chief Says Large-Scale Military Exercises To Be Held Soon

LD1504133396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Model units of the three branches of the army held a joint ceremony in Tehran this morning, in the run up to Army Day when the heroism of the ground forces of the army is celebrated.

According to the Central News Bureau, Major General 'Ali Shahbazi, chief of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces, addressed the ceremony, which was attended by senior army commanders, on the heroism of the army during the eight years of sacred defense.

He told the gathering that the army has played a significant role in the country's reconstruction and the self-sufficient production of military equipment, and that some of these achievements have been recognized outside the country.

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He also said that large-scale military exercises will be held soon to demonstrate defense capacity and further strengthen the army.

At the end of the ceremony military commanders watched a parade by the Armed Forces.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Bhutto Receives Libyan Deputy Foreign Minister

BK1604010696 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 15 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Libyan deputy foreign minister, Dr. (Salim Ibrahim bin-Amer), called on Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Islamabad. They discussed economic collaboration in a number of fields between Pakistan and Libya. They also discussed the situation in the region.

Pakistan: Editorial Warns Prime Minister To 'Tread Carefully'

BK1204101296 Lahore THE FRIDAY TIMES in English 11-17 Apr 96 p 1

[Editorial: "Tread Carefully, Ms Bhutto"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister, clearly, cannot stomach the supreme court's recent judgment. Ms Bhutto's speech in parliament two weeks ago was defiant, caustic, even contemptuous. She feels done in and she wants to hit back. Is this wise?

Ms Bhutto has trotted out a list of complaints against the judiciary in general and the recent judgment in particular. Most of her arguments, to be fair to her, are quite reasonable — the judiciary hasn't exactly been a paragon of virtue, consistency, good faith or political neutrality. The gist of what she is saying is this: PPP [Pakistan People's Party] governments have been, and remain, a victim of the establishment's double standards. What's sauce for the goose isn't sauce for the gander.

Granted that this may be true, does it follow that the prime minister should vent her outrage by demanding that the chief justice should be fired? If, as she alleges, the judges have judged in "anger", should she pay them back in the same coin? The 'loyalists' besieging her are not her friends. They only say what she wants to hear, rather than what she needs to know. By stoking the fire in her belly, they are leading her to a dangerous precipice.

This is what Ms Bhutto needs to be told:

1. "Yes, prime minister, the judiciary is being bloody-minded. This is partly because of historical reasons. But it's also because we've treated it shabbily. At any rate, even a cursory analysis of what it means to take the judges on in their current mood reveals many hidden costs and few tangible benefits. Would the prime minister, for example, care to consider the implications of a restoration of Mian Manzoor Wattoo's government in the Punjab? Is the government ready to answer awkward questions in court about a couple of dubious privatisation deals? Does she want her revised electoral rolls to be successfully challenged? Would her Attorney-General like the courts to review the powers of the prime minister vis-a-vis the president over appointments to the judiciary? Is she ready to hold local body polls immediately? Does she want to push the supreme court into ordering the FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] and IB [Intelligence Bureau] to investigate political corruption in government? And so on.

2. "Yes, prime minister, President Farooq Leghari appears to have become a bit disloyal of late. This is partly because of the intrinsic nature of the office of the head of state which has come to abhor 'Jiyala-ism'. (Even if the good Professor N C Khan had been sitting in the Presidency, he would have had occasion to say 'Nothing Doing, Prime Minister'). But it is also because you and your spouse continue to rub him up the wrong way. The fact is that Mr Leghari is still your best friend even though you are fast becoming your own worst enemy. If things carry on like this, all your enemies have to do is to sit back and enjoy the show while you foolishly go about driving a wedge between yourself and the president.

3. "Yes, prime minister, you are the head of a fairly elected government which enjoys a parliamentary majority. In theory, therefore, your word should be law. But it isn't so any longer because you and your spouse have wittingly eroded the moral legitimacy of your government by various acts of commission and omission. Therefore most people are inclined to believe the worst of you. The tragedy is that even when you are right or innocent, few are prepared to give you the benefit of the doubt."

Ms Bhutto's problem is that she has lost sight of the wood for the trees. She is trapped in a web of sham and incompetence spun by an army of sycophants. Arrogant by nature, mercurial by inclination, suspicious by experience and manipulative by temperament, she has increasingly isolated herself by alienating many people and institutions. If she continues in her reckless ways, it is difficult to predict a safe passage for her in time to come. But all may not yet be lost.

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Ms Bhutto should swallow her pride, anger and hurt and quickly compromise with the chief justice like a good politician. There is absolutely no point in thundering about the injustice of the judges or the inconsistency of their judgments. Nor is there anything to be gained from ticking off their personal failings or leaking stories about their behaviour. The judges are in the driving seat at the moment and there is nothing Ms Bhutto can do about it without triggering a fatal accident to her government.

The prime minister must also treat the presidency with the respect and sensitivity it deserves. President Leghari, as we have said time and again, is a good man devoted to democracy and clean government. He is now under tremendous pressure to prove his bonafides as a neutral head of state. If Ms Bhutto spurns his advice or insults his integrity she will push him into a corner from where there may be no retreat.

Trend carefully, Ms Bhutto. You cannot chew broken bottles with your teeth and expect not to get hurt.

Pakistan: Editorial Urges Catching Hospital Bombers

BK1504092996 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 15 Apr 96 p 7

[Editorial: "SKMT Explosion"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Imran Khan expressed the feelings of the nation when he said that those responsible for the bomb blast at the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Trust (SKMT) Hospital at Lahore were not human beings but monsters. The explosion, which occurred on Sunday [14 April] in the Out-Patient Department of the hospital killing four persons and injuring 31, many of them seriously, is an act that makes no sense. It was a reprehensible crime as it targeted nothing tangible but humaneness and goodness. Institutions dedicated to serving mankind can have no enemies. In this case the hospital was a pioneering effort in the treatment of cancer patients and conducting research in the disease. It was already providing succour and hope to many, who otherwise would have been doomed as the dreaded malaise slowly consumed their bodies.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who flew to Lahore immediately on hearing of the incident, visited the SKMT Hospital. Later, she went to the Jinnah Hospital to sympathize with the injured. She also strongly condemned the bomb blast, assuring that everything would be done to catch the culprits and ordered an inquiry into it this was earlier urged by Imran Khan. The Punjab Governor, too, has expressed shock over the incident and directed the administration to take all steps in aiding the injured and catching the criminals responsible. One can expect that, with the orders coming from the Prime Minister, the law and order and intelligence machinery will act expeditiously to probe the incident and apprehend the culprits.

Although an occurrence of this kind in any hospital would be a matter of great concern, its happening in the SKMT Hospital, might tend to give it a political shade.

The impression that Mr. Khan's relations with the government are from happy may tempt many to reach wholly unnecessary conclusions. Fortunately this has already been controverted by the anxiety shown by the Prime Minister and the personal interest she has taken in the matter.

The blast, however, will arouse serious misgivings as it is not in the nature of things that this should have taken place in a hospital, unless there was something sinister to it. It is for this reason that only a thorough inquiry which will identify the hidden hands behind it will assuage all manner of doubts that have arisen of late in the aftermath of several blasts in the Punjab metropolis and in other cities.

Pakistan has a long experience of blasts. It was a victim of numerous explosions in the past during the Afghan jehad days, which were inevitably blamed on the intelligence agencies of various inimical powers, but most of them remained unsolved. It was only for, the last seven or so years that the country had not experienced any major occurrence till the explosions at the Egyptian embassy and later in Peshawar. Both are yet to be solved. The incident at SKMT Hospital, therefore, has again brought the threat of such blasts to the fore, spelling out, as some see, a well-known pattern. The culprits must be caught before further damage can be done.

Pakistan: Editorial Condemns U.S. Delay of Military Equipment

BK1504095796 Islamabad KHABRAIN in Urdu 14 Apr 96 p 10

[Editorial: "Is the United States Imposing an Economic and Military Siege on Pakistan?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to a news report, hopes for the release of U.S. military equipment worth $368 million to Pakistan have proved baseless. The Pakistani delegation that went to Washington to hold talks on this issue is coming back without any success. Quoting responsible Pakistani sources, the report says that, in view of the latest situation, Pakistan will file a law suit in U.S. courts for the return of its money. A final decision in this regard will be made by the Cabinet's Defense Committee, which will meet on 18

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April. It is worth mentioning here that Pakistan has already been in touch with a firm of prominent U.S. lawyers regarding the refund of its money. The services of this firm will be acquired if the government decides to take legal action. It is the same law firm with which late U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown (who was killed in a recent air crash in Bosnia) was associated before joining the Clinton administration. If the Government of Pakistan decides to take legal action, not only will it have to conduct lengthy correspondence with the U.S. Administration, but a decision in the case might take several years.

Legal experts have been advising Pakistan to go to court for the refund of its money, but the Government of Pakistan has preferred to use other means due to repeated assurances from the U.S. Administration. After passage of the Brown Amendment, the U.S. authorities assured Pakistan that supply of the withheld military equipment would start within six weeks at the most. The return of the money paid for the F-16's, however, might take more time because these airplanes would have to be sold to a third country. The U.S. Administration has not taken much interest in the sale of these airplanes, and the F-16's that were to be supplied to Pakistan are deteriorating in Arizona. The United States recently announced the supply of a few F-16's to Egypt and Jordan, but these countries are being provided the F-16's from other sources.

When Senator Brown visited Pakistan recently, he also assured that Pakistan would receive every single penny that it has paid, or it would be supplied military equipment. Officials of the Clinton administration say that President Clinton will have to obtain approval from the Congress for making an allocation in the budget for the payment of the money, which seems very difficult in the current situation. In fact, the basic fault of the Brown Amendment is that it did not fix a timeframe for the return of the money or the supply of the equipment.

On the other hand, Sen. Pressler and the pro-Indian Zionist lobby has launched a full-fledged campaign for the annulment of the Brown Amendment and for stopping the supply of all military equipment to Pakistan. It seems that the Clinton administration has very tactfully imposed an economic and military blockade under the cover of its tall claims of friendship and sympathy with Pakistan; it is using all kinds of excuses and pretexts for obstructing the supply of military equipment to Pakistan. The United States seems to be following a policy of keeping Pakistan dependent on false hopes, making it so helpless that it turns into a protege of the new U.S. world order. It has assigned the IMF, the World Bank, and the consortium of donor countries with the job of an economic blockade of Pakistan. These institutions have taken complete control of Pakistan's economy. We cannot make even one financial move without the approval of the World Bank or the IMF, whereas the United States itself is taking care of the military blockade.

Under the cover of friendship and sympathy, the United States continues consoling us, but practically it is withholding supply of equipment that is of vital importance to our defense. It seems the United States wants us to give up our nuclear program, recognize Israel, forget about Kashmir, never talk about Islam, accept the hegemony of the U.S. nurtured mini-super power—India—and just leave ourselves at the mercy of India, Israel, and the United States.

The United States has withheld the supply of all the military equipment under the Pressler Amendment for the past six or seven years. Whenever we try to acquire military equipment from any other country, the United States opposes it. The result is that we have not been able to acquire any substantial weapons or military equipment from any country in the past six or seven years. Finally, France has agreed to provide us some Mirage airplanes and other military equipment, but not only is this equipment very expensive ($80 to 85 million per airplane) but we have not yet been able to make an initial payment for this equipment due to our economic constraints. Equipment worth about 100 million is totally obsolete and useless out of the equipment worth $368 million that is to be released under the Brown Amendment. The other equipment also does not fulfill current defense requirements. This equipment has become obsolete because the world has achieved much progress in the past six or seven years.

Pakistan: Foreign Ministry on U.S. Decision on Arms Supply, Refunds

BK1604051696 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 16 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The United States will release to Pakistan $368 million in military equipment embargoed since 1990 under the Pressler Amendment. This was stated by a U.S. Defense Department spokesman in Washington yesterday. He, however, said that no new sales were included in the decision.

Meanwhile, a Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad commenting on certain press reports said discussions on money paid by Pakistan for some of the unfulfilled or modified contracts are still continuing. He said the U.S. will make an immediate refund of over $120 million of excess funds from Pakistan foreign military sales account.

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Pakistan: Editorial Says Rao Nuclear Threat Not Just 'Rhetoric'

BK1404095096 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 14 Apr 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Narasimha Rao's Threat"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PRIME Minister Narasimha Rao's threat that India will go nuclear in case Pakistan "persists in the development of nuclear weapons" is a dangerous piece of pre-poll rhetoric, intended also to stem a plummeting popularity graph. Fielding a volley of questions at a press conference marking the unveiling of the Congress (I) election manifesto, Mr. Rao held Pakistan entirely responsible for all the wars the two South Asian neighbours have fought so far. Not to be left behind in this jingoistic sabre-rattling, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] (the most formidable challenger to Rao's Congress (I) government in the looming battle) too has made a similar vow.

Rao's drum-beating has obviously been prompted by a damage control strategy in the wake of massive scandals which have rocked his government. And the Hawala [illegal money transfer] affair may ultimately prove to be his "Watergate". Former minister Madhavrao Scindia, who quit the Rao cabinet in January this year and was later expelled from the party for his involvement in the scandal, appears meanwhile to be emerging as Rao's nemesis. The BJP has already withdrawn its candidate in favour of Mr Scindia.

It would be naive, however, for Islamabad to view Mr. Rao's threat purely as a vote-catching gimmick because New Delhi has long nursed nuclear ambitions. With its clandestine nuclear programme dating back to the early 1960s, New Delhi gatecrashed the exclusive club in 1974 by exploding a "peaceful nuclear device". It has since established as many as 48 major nuclear facilities with overt or covert western assistance. Taking advantage of the MTCR [Missile Technology Control Regime] lacunae, it has also developed a host of short and long-range ballistic missiles which can be fitted with nuclear and chemical warheads. And it has refused to sign the NPT [Nonproliferation Treaty] on the plea that it views the issue in a global, rather than a regional, perspective. In addition, perspective. In addition, New Delhi has displayed a penchant for gunboat diplomacy. The Seychelles, Maldives and Sri Lanka misadventures are only some of the glaring instances of this mindset.

Mr. Rao's latest threat of "going nuclear" therefore imparts credence to the recent spy satellite data showing "hectic" scientific activity" at India's Rajasthan nuclear test site in preparation for a second nuclear blast. Viewed in perspective, the postponement by New Delhi of the planned nuclear explosion a few months ago (apparently under foreign pressure) may after all have been a calculated move to coincide it later with the general elections to reap the maximum electoral benefit. Mr. Rao's threat should not therefore be dismissed as a rhetorical flourish on the electioneering trail. The United States, with its unrelenting nonproliferation agenda for the region vis-a-vis, Pakistan, should take due notice of the threat because giving it a practical shape will trigger serious repercussions for the whole of South Asia. New-Delhi too needs to be reined in for a change.

Pakistan: Official—No Atomic Reactor Agreement Signed With France

BK1504115096 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 15 Apr 96 p 12

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, April 14: Minister-in-charge of the Prime Minister Secretariat Sunday [14 April] informed the National Assembly that Pakistan had not signed any agreement so far with France of the supply of an atomic reactor. He was replying to a question from Rana Zahid Sarfraz that the French policy for the possible sale of a nuclear power plant has undergone a change since the offer was made.

However, he said that France now adheres to the principle of full scope 'safeguards for all nuclear supplies.'

He said that further discussion on the subject would be continued based on the commitment made earlier by France.

Pakistan: Opposition Leader Urges Nuclear Talks With India

BK1504104596 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 15 Apr 96 p 1

[PPI report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — Leader of the opposition Nawaz Sharif Sunday suggested that Pakistan and India should sit together and discuss the nuclear issue for the sake of peace and security in South Asia.

Speaking to Islamabad-based foreign correspondents here, Nawaz asked India not to detonate nuclear device as it would escalate tension in the region.

"There is a need to have a national policy on nuclear issue. The country needs a policy of consensus on sensitive issues", he stressed.

He said "we should learn from the past mistakes and should not give more controversies on vital issues like nuclear and Kashmir."

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The PML chief opposed issuance of press statements regarding the nuclear issue, saying "the issue should not be debated in public."

Nawaz briefed foreign correspondents on the country's political situation with special reference to the Supreme Court decision, government attitude towards the parliament, electoral reforms, appointment of judges, Karachi situation and other issues.

Pakistan: PTV To Begin 24-Hour Satellite Television Transmission

BK1304090096 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan Television satellite transmission would be available round the clock starting from 'Id al-Adha [29 or 30 April, depending on sighting of moon]. The decision is a major breakthrough, which will bring PTV at par with the prestigious global television networks. The satellite transmission would initially be on a trial basis. Currently, PTV's satellite transmission starts at 0700 [0200 GMT] in the morning and concludes at about midnight. The seven-hour-long transmission will now cater the needs of its viewers from midnight to 0700 at home and abroad. The midnight-to-0300 slot will be on prime time for the viewers in the Middle East, Turkey and Central Asian region. Similarly, 0300-to-0700 slot will serve as prime viewing hours for the viewers in the countries of Far East and SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] region. After ascertaining the viewers' response, changes in the satellite transmission will be made before launching a formal 24-hour transmission.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Navy Repulses LTTE Suicide Attack on Colombo Harbor

BK1204091996 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 12 Apr 96

["Flash" report by Panduka Senanayake — received via Internet; posted at 0500 GMT on 12 April]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Sri Lanka Navy early today (Friday) [12 April] foiled an LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] suicide attack on Shipping in the Colombo Harbour.

According to a Senior Navy Officer Naval Radar had, at about 5.45 a.m. spotted a boat attempting to enter the Colombo Harbour from the Mutuwal side, North of the Port. Navy Patrol crafts sent to intercept the boat had come under RPG and small arm fire. When the Naval craft retaliated, the Tiger boat had exploded.

Navy boats which immediately started a search in the harbour had come across a diver about 100-200 meters from the entrance to the harbour. When they fired at him he too had exploded. "We believe that both the LTTE boat and the diver were carrying explosives in a suicide attempt to sabotage the ships and installation in the harbour," a senior Navy Officer said, that at least four Tigers are believed to have been killed, and there was no significant damage caused in this morning's incident in the harbour.

Combined Navy, Army, Air Force and Police operations were launched in and around the harbour on a hunt for LTTE cadres soon after the incident.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Claims 'Credit' for Suicide Attack at Colombo Port

BK1304135696 Hong Kong AFP in English 1341 GMT 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, April 13 (AFP) — Tamil Tiger guerrillas Saturday [13 April] claimed credit for the daring suicide attack against Sri Lanka's main sea port here and admitted losing nine cadres as the country remained on red alert against more rebel violence.

The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in a statement from its London office said they destroyed three navy fast attack craft and three supply ships during Friday's dawn attack, a claim rejected by the military.

"Several rocket-propelled grenades were fired into harbour properties and other vessels in the port," said the LTTE statement, adding that the Sri Lankan government was trying to blackout the news.

However, just after the attack, the ports ministry allowed journalists and cameramen access to the port and they saw the remains of one suicide bomber and minor damage to two foreign-owned vessels and one local merchant ship.

The LTTE said its elite Black Sea Tiger suicide squad was involved in the attack and gave names of nine cadres, including a self-styled lieutenant colonel, who died in the attack.

Port officials said five more bodies were washed ashore Saturday raising to six the confirmed death toll in Friday's failed bid to devastate the Colombo harbour.

The LTTE claim came as the country celebrated the Sinhala and Tamil New Year and as security forces remained on red alert for more suicide attacks by the guerrillas.

Streets were empty and radio and television channels brought out special programs to mark the New Year

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celebrated jointly by the majority Sinhalese community and the minority Tamils.

"We certainly cannot think of any other occasion more appropriate than this to forge national unity," President Chandrika Kumaratunga said in her New Year message and added that the country's New Year resolution should be peace and unity.

Military officials said more troops were deployed to guard vital installations and keep up mobile patrols despite the holidays.

Ports Minister M. H. M. Ashraff said the Tigers may have targeted a liquid petroleum gas (LPG) tanker or tried to create havoc at the port by causing damage to ships but had failed to achieve their objective.

"I think they were not successful in their attack," Ashraff told reporters shortly afterwards. "If they had been successful in getting the LPG tanker, it could have caused a considerable loss."

An estimated 10 LTTE cadres were killed in the abortive attack which did not come as a total surprise because security had been strengthened anticipating just such an emergency, officials said.

The gas tanker was berthed near the port entrance where the LTTE tried to ram in a small boat filled with explosives after [word indistinct] Tiger frogmen strapped with explosives were detected and killed.

One of the frogmen may have exploded prematurely giving away the other, officials said. Three blue flippers and the remains of one suicide bomber were recovered by the navy.

A navy gunboat fired and blew the Tiger boat out of the water. Air force MI-24 helicopter gunships were called in to bomb and destroy another suspected LTTE craft about a mile (kilometre) north of the port.

"I can say that we had good security that was able to prevent even more damage," Ashraff told reporters at the Port. "But we will continue to strengthen our security arrangements."

In January, the LTTE bombed the Central Bank building in downtown Colombo, killing 91 people and wounding some 1,400 others. Since then, the police had issued an alert for a dozen LTTE suicide bombers in Colombo.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Claims Responsibility for Colombo Port Attack

BK1504080996 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 13 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The headquarters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] issued a statement today claiming responsibility for and detailing the daring attack that infiltrated the Sri Lankan Government's high security zone, inside the Colombo sea port. Three rapid attack craft and three supply ships belonging to the Sri Lankan Navy were damaged in this historic offensive launched by the Black Sea Tigers at 0130 yesterday morning. Nine Black Sea Tigers, including two women Black Sea Tigers, embraced martyrdom from the LTTE side while carrying out this successful surprise attack.

This attack was a joint operation of the Black Sea Tigers, the Sulojan diving squad, and the Ankayarkanni diving squad of the Black Sea Tigers. Swimming underwater the Black Sea Tiger frogmen attached bombs to the ships and blasted them at 0130 in the morning. At the same time, a speedboat of the Black Sea Tigers entered the port swiftly and attacked the buildings in the port complex with rocket propelled grenades. The building complex of the port was also damaged in the attack. At that time, there was fierce fighting between the Black Sea Tigers and Sri Lankan naval forces inside the harbor area. Many people are suspicious as to what was inside the blasted supply ships. When asked about his comments by BBC's Tamil Service correspondent, Ms. Anandi, about reports that the ships targeted by the LTTE were carrying arms to the Sri Lankan Government, Ashaf, Sri Lanka's minister for ports and shipping, denied the reports by giving a vague response.

Black Sea Tigers — Lieutenant Colonel Rathees from Velvettiturai, Major Radan and Major Poyyamozhi from Trincomalee, Major Janardhanan from Kankesnathurai, Major Nawaz from (Sirukottai), Major Paran from Point Pedro, Captain Subash from Trincomalee, as well as Captain Madani and Captain Vicky from Vettilaikerny embraced martyrdom in this successful and colossal offensive that was launched yesterday. Our tributes go to those national heroes of Tamil Eelam, who marched into the citadel of the enemy for the sake of the liberation of Tamil Eelam.

The fact that the Sea Tigers can penetrate the enemy's security zone with weapons in groups and launch offensives has frightened the Sri Lankan authorities. A correspondent from Colombo reports that the nightmares of Sri Lankan authorities have come true.

Citing the pledge of Minister Ratwatte that he would eliminate the LTTE before the Tamil New Year, political observers point out that the Tigers have carried out a major unprecedented daring attack by penetrating their stronghold just two days before this deadline.

The Sri Lankan Government is attempting to completely conceal reports of yesterday's offensive. The Sri Lankan Government has not allowed any media personnel to

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visit the area, and has put out a totally fictitious story before the Sinhalese people and foreign news agencies.

The Tigers' aspirations: Motherland of Tamil Eelam! Thanks.

Sri Lanka: Port Security Strengthened Following LTTE Attack

BK1404124796 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 14 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The chairman of the Ports Authority, Sundara Jayewardene, says that the attempt to attack the Colombo port by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists was foiled due to the strict security arrangements at the harbor. However, action has been taken to further strengthen the security after this incident. A six-member committee has been appointed by the minister of ports and shipping to find ways and means to carry out security measures at the harbor. Full security will be provided to the ships anchored inside the port as well as the ships at outer harbor. The Ports Authority chairman disclosed these details at a reception hosted to ship captains and their local representatives in connection with the Sinhala and Tamil New Year. A special security plan will be implemented by the Navy, Air Force, and the police.

Sri Lanka: Minister Says Port Safe for International Shipping

BK1604022296 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 16 Apr 96

[Unattributed Report — Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PORTS, Shipping, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Minister M.H.M. Ashraff who paid a visit to the Colombo Port on Monday [15 April] following last Friday's abortive attempt by the Tigers to attack the Port assured all international Shipping Lines and Agencies that Colombo Port was absolutely safe.

Colombo Port is fully geared to meet all exigencies and the Shipping Lines are welcomed as usual, Minister Ashraff said.

Contrary to news reports that the security was lax at the Port, the Minister said the manner in which the naval and Port security handled the crisis effectively showed how well the security at the Port was well geared to meet any eventuality.

Official sources said that instructions have been issued to shoot at sight any unauthorised vessel or craft, including fishing boats which stray into the 4 mile security zone in the outer harbour area.

"Only those vessels which had obtained prior authority to enter the harbour will be permitted to enter this zone", the officials said.

The Minister toured the outer harbour area in a navy boat with his officials to ascertain what security measures had to be taken to further tighten the security in the port. He also gave the necessary directions to his officials in this regard.

He commended the Naval and Ports security and flag staff men for outwitting the Tigers and effectively repulsing the Tiger attack.

Officials said nearly all port workers attended work on Monday. The shipping berths were full and the workers were actively engaged in clearing the backlog of work following the New Year holidays.

Earlier, Minister Ashraff awarded Rs. 500 each to all port workers who reported for duty last Friday, the day of the abortive attack on the Port by Tigers.

A source in the shipping trade told the Daily News that the very fact the Port was working at full strength two days after the attempted Tiger attack proved that the security forces had completely blunted the attempt to cripple the Port.

The Minister was accompanied by Mr. M.N. Junaid, Secretary to the Ministry, Commodore H.R. Amaraweera, Western Command Sri Lanka Navy, Mr. M.I.M. Rafeek, Vice Chairman, Sri Lanka Ports Authority and Capt. S. Chinniah, Harbour Master.

Sri Lanka: Colombo Port Resumes Operations Following LTTE Attack

BK1204114596 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Colombo port has resumed its operations after an interruption for a few hours early today when an LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] suicide squad attempted to attack the harbor. Minister of Ports and Shipping M.H.M. Ashraff in an exclusive telephone interview with the SLBC said that the situation had been brought under control and there was no cause for panic. The Sea Tigers launched an attack on the Colombo harbor at 0545 today. The naval security personnel lost no time in repulsing the attack and destroying the suicide bombers.

Minister Ashraff said that the security officers had seen a boat painted in white entering the harbor through its north entrance. LTTE suicide attackers entered the port with explosives, weapons and rocket-propelled grenades and started firing at random in all directions. The

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naval officers destroyed the boat. The minister also revealed that securitymen spotted about three LTTE divers carrying explosives in the harbor basin and killed them instantly.

Minister Ashraff said that during the confrontation three vessels were slightly damaged. He said that the massive explosions heard in the morning came from the antidiver chargers, which are used by the Navy to kill the terrorists. The minister commended the gallant security personnel for their excellent action in bringing the situation under control. Minister Ashraff has also appealed to journalists and media institutions to act with responsibility and wisdom in disseminating information. He has asked the newsmen not to exaggerate any incident and create panic and confusion but to inform the public what actually happened.

Meanwhile, the LTTE had hijacked a Land Cruiser [vehicle] belonging to the aid organization (Keha) International on Wednesday [10 April] morning at Mawadimavu in the Batticaloa District. However, a [word indistinct] peace committee member had negotiated with the LTTE and the vehicle was released to the Chenkaladi detachment. The vehicle was badly damaged and it was reported that the occupants of the vehicle — one Sinhala and three Tamil females — were dropped at the point of hijacking. A news release from the Operational Headquarters of the Ministry of Defense received this morning said that the whereabouts of the four females were yet not known.

Sri Lanka: Port Security Probe Initiated After Aborted Rebel Raid

BK1604033596 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 16 Apr 96

[Editorial: "Vigilance Wins" — received via internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] THE aborted attempt by "Sea Tigers" to attack Colombo Port in the wee hours of last Friday [12 April], once again, underlines the need for continuous vigilance in all parts of the country. It, of course, goes without saying that fool-proof security measures should be constantly in place at locations which are important for the country from the economic and strategic point of view. The same goes for the country's infrastructure facilities.

In the case of the attempted attack on the Colombo Port, an institution vital for the functioning of the country's economy, constant vigilance has clearly paid off. Reports said that two minor employees of the Port had first detected the two LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] frogmen going through the initial motions of carrying out the attack. They had apparently alerted the Port security personnel, who had in turn done their checking and called for assistance from the Sri Lanka Navy, which was promptly extended. What followed is now almost common knowledge. The Sri Lanka Navy lost no time in blasting two Tiger "vallams", which were apparently on their way to attack the Port. Several "Sea Tigers", including the two frogmen who were detected first, were killed in the counter attack.

Another horrifying disaster would have occurred in Colombo, incurring stunning costs, both in human and material terms, had not the two employees of the Port been on the alert. Had not the security personnel at the Port and the Sri Lanka Navy acted so promptly and with such professional skill, sections of the Port would have gone up in flames and triggered economic reversals of unheard of proportions. The nation would have suffered another crippling trauma. Thanks to all the personnel involved in aborting this LTTE attack, the people of this country went through their New Year festivities without experiencing any depressing interruptions. The nation salutes these heroes who did their duty courageously.

The aborted LTTE attack proves very amply that we have the brains, brawn and expertise to ward off such disasters. Given the required level of conscientiousness and alertness the people of this country and the armed forces can outsmart the rampaging Tiger and bring it to heel. The state of alertness and courage that has just been displayed must, however, continue.

The appointment of a six member committee to probe the incident and ascertain whether there have been any security lapses at the Port, is, nevertheless, a welcome development. There is speculation whether the frogmen who penetrated the Port, despite round-the-clock surveillance of the area, knew the location of certain targets. It is vital that the committee goes into these matters and gets at the truth. The findings will help the country in the task of adopting fool-proof security measures.

Sri Lanka: Army Clears Valikkamam Division of Jaffna Peninsula of LTTE

BK1204132296 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 12 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Valikkamam division of the Jaffna peninsula has been cleared of LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists, Acting Army Commander Major General Rohan Dalwatte told LANKAPUVATH yesterday. A total of 153 terrorists were killed in a week-long search and clear operation, which ended this week. The security forces also captured 195 weapons, grenades, explosives, and radio transmitters.

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The residents of the Valikkamam division and the offshore island west of Jaffna are celebrating the new year in a spirit of joy and freedom after they were freed of the (?shackles) of repression and fear under the LTTE for 13 years. A new year festival was held in the town of Vasavilan organized by the [word indistinct] from the residents of Jaffna city and other areas liberated from the Tigers. The security forces are now in control of the entire western sector, including Jaffna city and Elephant Pass and Vettilaikerny constituting 45 percent of the northern peninsula.

Sri Lanka: Editorial Decries Attack on Civilian Areas in Jaffna

BK1304090796 Colombo VIRAKESARI in Tamil 29 Mar 96 p 2

[Editorial:"Are People the Targets?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There have been heavy aerial bombings and shell attacks on Vadamarachchi and Thenmarachchi localities in Jaffna peninsula. Several houses have been reduced to ashes in Vadamarachchi and the Chavakachchery Women's College was damaged in Thenmarachchi.

The government has reportedly issued strict instructions not to target civilian areas during war; however, attacks on civilians have been stepped up during this government's tenure.

After the attacks on Navali cathedral, Nakarkoyil school, and the civilians in Mannar and Nachchikuda, the Chavakachchery Women's College has now become the target of shell attacks.

Shell attacks, aerial bombings, and helicopter gunship attacks have been carried out indiscriminately. Civilians are mostly killed in these attacks, which are launched without any prior intimation or warning.

These incidents have, time and again, been brought to the government's notice; however, none of the government's pledges have been honored. Quite often, attacks are only carried out on civilian localities.

Talking about peace on the one hand and stepping up attacks on civilians on the other only helps to alienate the Tamils.

The international community will not always give credence to the statements on the attacks on terrorist bases or on the details of the number of terrorists killed.

It is imperative on the part of the government to issue strict instructions to avoid civilian targets during attacks and to see that those instructions are strictly adhered.

Sri Lanka: Muslims, 3 Tamil Parties Discuss North-East Province Devolution

BK1604034596 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 16 Apr 96

[Unattributed report — Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] THE Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) has commenced discussions with three Tamil parties represented in parliament about the unit of devolution in the North-East province.

At the first round of talks held on Wednesday [10 April], SLMC leader M.H.M. Ashraff told leaders of the Tamil United Liberation Front, Eelam People's Democratic Party and People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam that any solution, to be durable, should satisfy the aspirations of the Tamils and the Muslims of the North-East.

Political sources said there was general agreement that a solution acceptable to both communities and which is fair to the Sinhalese living in that province should be worked out.

SLMC placed before the Tamil leaders four documents which had suggested ways and means of solving this problem. They were: Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Agreement of 1957; [B-C Pact] the agreement reached in 1992 at the All Party Conference and the Thondaman-Ashraff agreement.

The B-C Pact has suggested a unit for the northern province and two or more units for the east with the power for two or more units to work together.

The 1992 agreement made arrangements for power sharing between the Tamils and the Muslims.

The Thondaman-Ashraff agreement spoke of a unit for the Muslims in the North-East under the merged province which safeguards the interests and the separate identity of the Muslim population.

"We will study the agreements already reached and adopt something that would suit the present situation" a Tamil party spokesman said.

EPDP secretary general Douglas Devananda said the Tamil parties will now formulate a common position before they meet the SLMC on May 11 for the second round.

The second round had been fixed for May as Mr. Ashraff will be away in Mecca for Hajj. He is leading a 5,000-member pilgrim group.

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